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SINAI IN ARABIA

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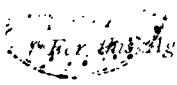
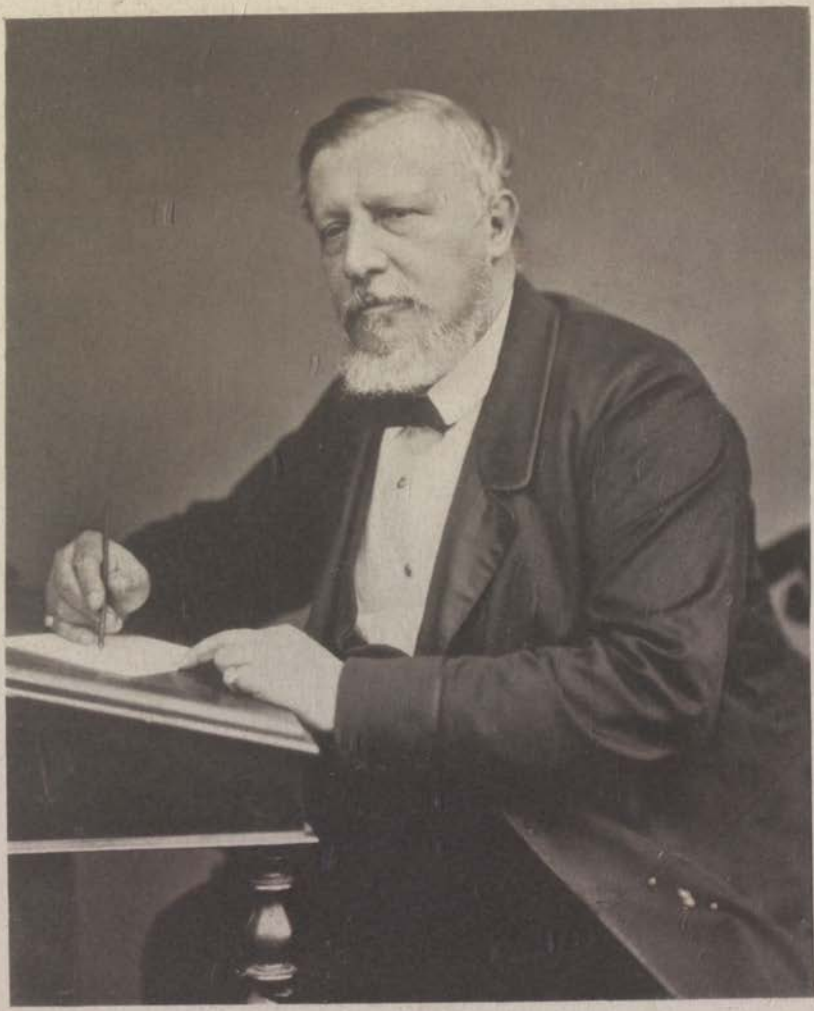


For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia.

GAL. iv. 25



Charles Beke

THE LATE

DR. CHARLES BEKE'S

DISCOVERIES OF

SINAI IN ARABIA

AND OF

MIDIAN

WITH PORTRAIT

GEOLOGICAL, BOTANICAL, AND CONCHOLOGICAL REPORTS, PLANS, MAP, AND THIRTEEN WOOD ENGRAVINGS

8519 5a

EDITED BY HIS WIDOW

AUTHOR OF "JACOB'S FLIGHT," ETC

LONDON
TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL
1878

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"I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."

Ps. lxxi. 16–18.

'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

Ps. xxxvii. 5.

"And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Gal. vi. 9.

"Lord, not my will but thine be done!"

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INTRODUCTION.

'Malheureux celui qui est en avant de son siècle."

"Oft as ye sink : Rise."

"The world may say I've fail'd : I have *not* fail'd
If I set truth 'fore men they will not see ;
Tis they who fail, not I. My faith holds firm,
And time will prove me right."

"Che sara sara."

THE present work contains the narrative of an expedition to North-Western Arabia, undertaken at the commencement of 1874, by my lamented husband, Dr. Charles Beke, Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.G.S. (at the advanced age of seventy-three, and on recovering from a serious illness), in order to establish, by personal observation, the correctness of the views expressed by him in his *Origines Biblicæ* forty-four years ago, respecting the true position and physical character of the Mount of God on which the Law was delivered to Moses, the inspired leader of the Israelites.

The first three chapters, which were written by Dr. Beke, show the results of this expedition, and may claim to be considered the outcome of the efforts of the greater part of a lifetime to elucidate and substantiate the truth of the Bible History from the Holy Scriptures themselves.

By disputing only the "*traditional* explanations of the *Geography* of the Scriptures"—the errors of which have unhappily caused the authority of the Scriptures themselves to be called in question—and by endeavouring to discover the correct position of the Mount of God in Horeb, where was delivered that Divine Law which to this day forms the basis of the legislation of all civilised nations and the rule of their religious and social conduct, and upon the settlement of which question depends the right understanding of the whole history of the Exodus, Dr. Beke has, I venture to think my readers will admit, incontrovertibly cleared away many of the difficulties and doubts which have hitherto disturbed earnest and anxious minds.

He has done a good work in having thus paved the way for others to arrive at a final settlement of the whole of the important questions connected with the Exodus of the Israelites, whereby many wan-

derers may (with God's help) be brought back to the fold.

My husband left England on his memorable journey in search of the true Mount Sinai on December 8, 1873; and, after an absence of three months and eleven days, he returned home on March 19, 1874, having in the intervening period accomplished his task, and discovered "Mount Sinai in Arabia" (Jebel-e'-Nūr, the Mountain of Light), precisely in the position where he contended it should be looked for. He was also so fortunate as to discover Moses' "Place of Prayer" at Madiān, the capital of Midian, where Captain Burton[1] has now gone to make further explorations, and to develop the gold mines of this ancient Land of Midian.

But although Dr. Beke found his Mount Sinai, it turned out not to be a "volcano," as he had previously contended that it might be; or at least, Dr. Beke says, "it cannot be proved to have been one, but at the same time cannot be proved *not* to have been one. If this is really the true Mount Sinai, it is as little a 'volcano' as the traditional one is,

[1] Just after I had sent these pages to press, I saw the gratifying announcement in the "Times" of Captain Burton's safe return, bringing with him twenty-five tons of ore.

or else geology is all at fault. The same arguments that Sir George Airy uses to prove that the traditional mountain was volcanic, will, however, apply to this mountain also, for the geological formation of both seems the same."

The truthful, manly, and straightforward way in which, it will be remembered, Dr. Beke's recantation was at once announced, the public will hardly have failed to appreciate. The courage which such an act required could but have sprung from the highest and most unselfish motives,[1] and must have proved to demonstration that the first and sole object of Dr. Beke's expedition was simply the elucidation of the truth. Such an admission of the fact of his not finding his Mount Sinai to be a volcano, as he had expected, can surely not be deemed to invalidate, but, on the contrary, to enhance, the value of Dr. Beke's discovery. Of the action of one who will admit with frank and ready courtesy that he has been mistaken, it may be said that it "blesseth him that gives and him that takes"—it covers his own retreat with gracefulness, and gives his adversaries a pleasant memory of an encounter with a generous foe.

The controversy which ensued in the columns of

[1] See p. 436.

the "Times" and other journals[1] upon the question, is doubtless fresh in the minds of those who are interested in this important subject, as also the sad fact that my lamented husband's sudden death unhappily cut all further controversy and his labours short. His pen dropped from his hand ere he could complete the *résumé*, upon which he was engaged, of the facts collected on his journey and from his long and deep researches. The loss is irremediable, and for me too recent and painful to dwell on here.

Thus, the trying responsibility unfortunately devolved upon me of editing this work. The first three chapters, although to a certain extent completed, required some revision, and the many references to the authorities from whom Dr. Beke drew his information, and to which he alludes with brevity—although not too concise for his own well-stored mind—left his editor many difficulties to overcome.

In this emergency, the Rev. Albert Löwy, the learned editor of the works published by the Society of Hebrew Literature, kindly came to my aid, and not only volunteered me the benefit of his able revision of most of the Hebrew texts which

[1] See Appendix B.

occur; but through his friendly instrumentality I am also indebted to Mr. Richard Garnett, of the British Museum, for much valuable assistance; and to both these gentlemen I have the greatest pleasure in here recording my sincere thanks. To Mr. W. W. Waddington, whose services in verifying references I have availed myself of, my thanks are also due.

I fear that the publication of this book has been looked for long ere this, but continued ill-health and lack of means rendered the execution of this labour of love utterly impossible on my part. My health, however, by God's blessing, becoming somewhat re-established last summer, I felt it to be one of my first duties to endeavour to publish this work, and that I owed it no less in justice to my husband's memory than to the subscribers to his expedition.

My best and most earnest thanks must, therefore, here be tendered to the liberal-minded noblemen and friends who so kindly assisted me privately in my efforts to publish this book. Also to my adopted daughter, Mrs. J. Laurence-Levi, without whose self-sacrifice, indefatigable solicitude, and invaluable co-operation I could not have accomplished my task.

I could have wished that the editing of so important a work had fallen to some far more competent person, and one better able than I am to render justice to my husband's labours, and to the subject generally. I would venture, however, to ask my readers, before perusing the following pages, to be so good as to bear in mind that I do not lay claim to any literary merit in the production of this work; but simply to have given to the public a truthful and unvarnished statement of what my lamented husband did and saw on his expedition in search of the true Mount Sinai.

I have felt that I could not do this better, or more satisfactorily to others, than by letting Dr. Beke's very characteristic letters to me (as the late Mr. William Longman suggested), on this, his last journey, tell their own tale—as I believe they, and his "Notes on Egypt," will be found most interesting, especially at the present time.

If in giving them, as I have done, almost *verbatim*, I should have given my readers cause to complain of a certain amount of repetition, I must remind them that they were written more as a journal of daily events than as ordinary letters; and that from the sad fact of this journey having

been Dr. Beke's *last*, I have not liked to omit more than was absolutely necessary.

Though Dr. Beke hardly expected latterly to have been permitted to accomplish it himself, this journey was one of his most cherished wishes, and was one of the last tasks he had set himself to perform in early life, it being one of those "dreams" so feelingly referred to in his Preface to his "British Captives in Abyssinia."

It may well be conceived, therefore, that his gratitude to those few scientific and other friends who generously supported his expedition was commensurate with the importance of the subject he had so much at heart.[1]

I am glad to avail myself of this opportunity of respectfully expressing my deep *reconnaisance* to the enlightened and generous patron of scientific exploration, His Highness the Khédive of Egypt, who, by having kindly granted Dr. Beke the use of a steamer, so materially conduced to alleviate the fatigues of my husband's journey, and to its successful accomplishment.

[1] With profound regret I see in the "Times" of the 4th May the announcement of the sad and fatal termination of the accident to Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart., M.P., one of the most generous and kind-hearted patrons of my late husband. The loss of so good and noble a man will be universally felt.

Further, I beg to tender my thanks to his Excellency Nubar Pasha, and to Messrs. Oppenheim & Co. (especially Mr. Henry Oppenheim), through whose courtesy and aid Dr. Beke's "wish" was brought to the knowledge of the Khédive. The ready help afforded Dr. Beke by the several naval officials, and our many other good friends in Egypt, was fully appreciated.

I must also state how great a relief it was to Dr. Beke to have been accompanied by so able a geologist[1] and assistant generally as Mr. John Milne, as my husband frequently testifies. The illustrations are nearly all from sketches by Mr. Milne, whose valuable services as artist, geologist, botanist, and conchologist to the expedition, I have much pleasure in recording, though I regret that, owing to his absence in Japan, these reports have not had the benefit of his revision; but Messrs. William Carruthers, F.R.S., and Edgar Smith, of the British Museum, have done me the favour to revise the botanical and conchological lists.

The observations made by Dr. Beke on the journey[2] were computed by Mr. R. Strachan, at

[1] The geological specimens, &c., collected at Midian and Akaba were, by Dr. Beke's desire, presented to the British Museum.

[2] See Appendix C.

the instance and expense of the Royal Geographical Society, and have kindly been revised for press by Captain George, R.N. The map has been drawn by Mr. E. Weller, F.R.G.S., from Dr. Beke's materials, he having unfortunately only left his *route* prepared for his map; but this also has had the important benefit of Captain George's revision,—and for this friendly aid I am most deeply indebted to him, having met with considerable and unexpected difficulties in the matter of its preparation for publication.

In apologising for my inefficiency and many shortcomings in the production of this volume, I would venture to crave the indulgence of my "critical" readers. The delay and the faults are greater than possibly might otherwise have been, owing to the difficulties under which I have laboured, of additional suffering caused by a railway accident last year, and especially to the fact that this is the first time of my appearing in a literary capacity, so to say, single-handed—the master-hand that supported and directed me in my former publication ("Jacob's Flight") being, alas! no longer here to guide me.

I feel the more diffidence, as the task (although

a labour of love) I have imposed on myself, is that of giving to the world the last fruits of my husband's labours—which he himself was not permitted to see ripen, but which, had he been spared to bring to maturity, would have afforded a much richer store—and because I could not hope to do justice to his thoughts and intentions. But in spite of this and of the numerous drawbacks I have had to contend against, I have nevertheless been unwilling to withhold altogether from the public the information my dear husband has left.

I am indebted to Messrs. Trübner & Co., my publishers, for considerable assistance and kindness; and also to my printers, Messrs. Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., for the trouble they have taken with the manuscript of an invalid.

In conclusion, I have only to mention that I have recently heard that Mr. Holland has again started for Mount Sinai. It is, therefore, earnestly to be hoped, that he will not fail to give to Dr. Beke's 'Mount Sinai' that attention and *impartial* consideration and further investigation which it so richly deserves, and which all who desire to arrive at the *truth* must wish to see bestowed upon it. Should Mr. Holland do this, it cannot be doubted

that he will bring back information of the highest value, for which he will merit the grateful thanks of myself and all believers in the truth of the Bible narrative. May God speed him!

EMILY BEKE,
née ALSTON.

FERNDALE VIEW, TUNBRIDGE-WELLS,
25*th April* 1878,
The Anniversary of my Wedding-Day.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE TRADITIONAL MOUNT SINAI, AND ITS RIVALS WITHIN THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, ... 1

CHAPTER II.

THE NON-IDENTITY OF THE MITZRAIM OF SCRIPTURE WITH THE EGYPT OF PROFANE HISTORY—ITS POSITION, AND THAT OF THE LAND OF MIDIAN, ... 45

CHAPTER III.

THE DYNASTIES OF MANETHO, AND ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE SHEPHERD KINGS, OR MITZRITES, ... 79

CHAPTER IV.

NARRATIVE OF DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO DISCOVER "THE TRUE MOUNT SINAI," FROM HIS LETTERS TO HIS WIFE, . 124

CHAPTER V.

SOJOURN IN EGYPT, "NOTES ON," 157

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR JOURNEY TO AKABA—RECEPTION BY THE KHÉDIVE—HIS HIGHNESS GRANTS DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO ARABIA THE ASSISTANCE OF A STEAMER—"NOTES ON EGYPT," 211

CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT—VOYAGE ROUND THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, OR PSEUDO MOUNT SINAI—DISCOVERY OF MIDIAN—VOYAGE UP THE GULF OF AKABA—RED SEA, OR SEA OF EDOM, ... 285

CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE

JOURNEY INLAND—EXPLORATIONS IN ARABIA PETRÆA—DISCOVERY OF THE "TRUE MOUNT SINAI"—JEBEL BÁGHIR OR MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT—RETURN TO EGYPT THROUGH MITZRAIM, ... 387

CHAPTER IX.

RETURN TO CAIRO—FAREWELL AUDIENCE OF THE KHÉDIVE—HOMEWARD BOUND, ... 489

APPENDIX A.

GEOLOGICAL NOTES ON THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, NORTH-WESTERN ARABIA, AND "MOUNT SINAI" (JEBEL BÁGHIR), BY MR. JOHN MILNE, F.G.S., ... 525

APPENDIX B.

COPY OF THE CONTROVERSY ON THE LATE DR. CHARLES BEKE'S DISCOVERY OF THE "TRUE MOUNT SINAI" IN ARABIA, . 556

APPENDIX C.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS MADE ON THE JOURNEY TO MOUNT SINAI (JEBEL BÁGHIR) BY DR. CHARLES T. BEKE, PH.D., F.S.A., F.R.G.S., ETC., ... 591

APPENDIX D.

COPY OF MR. OLIVER'S DETERMINATION OF PLANTS COLLECTED NEAR AKABA BY MR. JOHN MILNE, F.G.S., ON DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO SINAI IN ARABIA, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1874, ... 593

APPENDIX E.

LIST OF SHELLS COLLECTED ON DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO SINAI IN ARABIA BY MR. JOHN MILNE, F.G.S., . . 595

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
PORTRAIT OF THE LATE DR. BEKE, AND AUTOGRAPH SIGNATURE	*Frontispiece*
SHERM EL MONJEH	319
AINÚNAH	327
MIDIAN	340
MOSQUE OF MOSES	349
PLAN OF DO.	349
JESIRAT FIR'ÔN (PHARAOH'S ISLAND)	359
HEAD OF THE GULF OF AKABA	372
MIGDOL, OR CASTLE OF AKABA	374
EAST SPUR OF "MOUNT SINAI"	403
JUNCTION OF WADIES AMRAN AND ITHEM (ETHAM) . .	442
INSCRIPTIONS ON "MOUNT SINAI"	243
PI-HA-HIROTH (AT WADY EL MAHASERAT)	460
BRIDGE AT WADY EL SATKH	471
GEOLOGICAL SECTIONS	537, 545
MAP OF NORTH-WESTERN ARABIA AND ROUTE .	*At end of Book*
SECTION OF DR. BEKE'S ROUTE	

The Woodcuts are by Mr. W. J. Welch.

DISCOVERY OF MOUNT SINAI IN ARABIA.

CHAPTER I.*

THE TRADITIONAL MOUNT SINAI, AND ITS RIVALS WITHIN THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN.

When we take into consideration the momentous character of the subject, it would seem natural to conclude that the position of the Holy Mountain on which the Law was revealed to the inspired leader of the Israelites, would not, and indeed could not, be a matter of question. We might reasonably conjecture that the Mount of God would be to them too sacred a spot ever to have been lost sight of; that the knowledge of its locality could not have failed to be retained by the whole people from generation to generation, and handed down by them to their descendants the Jews; that from these, in due course of time, it would have been transmitted to the Christians, and religiously preserved by the latter down to the present day. But it is not so.

* Written by the late Dr. Beke, 28th May 1874.

As far as the written records of the Israelites are concerned, the mention of Sinai, or Horeb,[1] as it is otherwise called, is confined to the history of Moses and of the Exodus narrated in the Pentateuch, with the single exception of the incident in the life of the prophet Elijah, who is recorded[2] to have gone from Beersheba unto "Horeb the Mount of God," and to have there lodged in a cave, which is conjectured, not unreasonably perhaps, though without a tittle of evidence in support of the conjecture, to have been the identical "cleft of the rock" wherein Moses had been hidden[3] when the glory of the Lord passed by him.

If, therefore, any tradition on the subject existed among the Jews, it must have been simply oral, liable to be forgotten in the lapse of ages, and especially during the time of national peril. Their descendants at the present day avow that they have no traditional knowledge on the subject. Nevertheless it is a remarkable fact that the Jewish historian Josephus gives a description of Mount Sinai, from which it would almost appear that some traditional knowledge on the subject

[1] Exod. iii. 1; Deut. i. 6. [2] 1 Kings xix. 8, 9.
[3] Exod. xxxiii. 22.

had been handed down to his time. When relating how Moses fled from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, he says that "he came to the city Midian, which lay upon the Red Sea, and was so denominated from one of Abraham's sons by Keturah."[1] Now we are told in Scripture, that those descendants of the Patriarch were sent into the "east country,"[2] that is to say, into the regions lying to the east of the valley of the Jordan and its continuance southward to the Gulf of Akaba, and not anywhere within the peninsula west of that gulf, where Moses's place of refuge has been so erroneously imagined to have been situated.

The Jewish historian then goes on to describe the Mountain of God in these specific terms:— "Now this is the highest of all the mountains thereabout, and the best for pasturage, the herbage being there good; and it had not been before fed upon, because of the opinion men had that God dwelt there, the shepherds not daring to ascend up to it."[3]

And in a subsequent passage, when describing how Moses ascended Mount Sinai, he says, this mountain was "the highest of all the mountains

[1] Josephus, lib. ii. cap. xi. sect. 1, Whiston's trans.
[2] Gen. xxv. 6. [3] Op. cit., lib. ii. cap. xii. sect. 1.

that are in that country, and is not only very difficult to be ascended by men, on account of its vast altitude, but because of the sharpness of its precipices also; nay, indeed, it cannot be looked at without pain of the eyes; and besides this, it was terrible and inaccessible, on account of the rumour that passed about, that God dwelt there."[1]

In the Christian Scriptures the only mention made of the Mountain of the Law is by the Apostle Paul, who, in his Epistle to the Galatians,[2] speaks of "Mount Sinai in Arabia;" which expression, however, is too indefinite to allow any conclusion to be drawn from it, except perhaps that, as in the Apostle's time, the name of Arabia was limited to the country east of the Jordan, Mount Sinai itself must likewise have been deemed to have been situated there. And as Aretas, king of Arabia, that is to say, Arabia Petræa, of which Petra was the capital,[3] was at the same time king of Damascus;[4] and as in the same Epistle the Apostle expressly relates, how, after his conversion, "immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood," but "went *into*

[1] Op. cit., lib. iii. cap. v. sect. 1.

[2] Gal. iv. 25.

[3] See Josephus, Antiq. xiv. 1, 4; Wars of the Jews, i. 6, 2.

[4] See 2 Cor. xi. 32; Origines Biblicæ, p. 254 (note); Gal. i. 16, 17.

Arabia," whence he "returned again to Damascus;" it may even be conjectured that the Apostle had "Mount Sinai in Arabia" in his mind, in consequence of his personal acquaintance with the locality.

Still this would be ascribing to the Apostle more accurate geographical knowledge than probably we have a right to attribute to him. It is nevertheless possible that this statement of St. Paul, like that of his contemporary and co-religionist Josephus, may have been derived from the last lingering spark of Jewish oral tradition, which did not become quite extinguished till after the cessation of the national existence of the people.

It may not be without bearing on this subject to add, that Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second century, when speaking of the Magi, or wise men, who, in the first Gospel,[1] are said to come "from the east," always describes them as "Magi from Arabia" (*μάγοι ἀπὸ Ἀραβίας*).[2]

Meanwhile, however, the school of Alexandria had come into existence, to which so many learned Jews belonged, and which exercised so vast an influence upon early Christianity. Naturalised in

[1] Matt. ii. 1. [2] Dial. Tryph., lxxviii. cvi.

Egypt, the Jews were proud to trace a connection which, in reality, had never existed between the history of their adopted country and that of their Hebrew ancestors, and hence they came to remodel the geography of the Pentateuch from an Egyptian point of view.

On this important subject I have already stated my opinion in my first work, "Origines Biblicæ,"[1] published in the year 1834, and in many subsequent publications, and I shall also have occasion to discuss it in a subsequent portion of the present work; I therefore need not dwell on it now.[2] All that I have occasion to say here is, that the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, being assumed to have taken place somewhere at the head of the Gulf of Suez, it necessarily follows that the scene of their wanderings must have been shifted into the regions lying immediately to the east of the gulf; hence Mount Sinai would naturally have come to be placed somewhere within the mountainous country between that gulf and the Gulf of Akaba.

It is, however, a most significant fact that not a single place recorded in the Old Testament, in

[1] See Orig. Bibl., pp. 8, 13.

[2] Unhappily Dr. Beke's lamented death happened before he could complete his task.—ED.

connection with the Exodus of the Israelites can conclusively, or even satisfactorily, be pointed out as represented at the present day by a similar name within that peninsula, or as having been known to the Greeks or Romans under its ancient Biblical designation.

The Pharan of Ptolemy[1] and of the early Christian writers,[2] the country of the Lapis Pharanites of Pliny,[3] which is identified with the modern Feiran, in the vicinity of the copper and turquoise mines, is indeed deemed by Professor Lepsius,[4] and also by Professor Palmer,[5] to be an evident reminiscence of the ancient Biblical name Paran. Yet the latter traveller does not attempt actually to identify Feiran with the Paran of the Bible,[6] which he places in a totally different position; for he says, "I concur with Wilton (the Negeb, p. 124) in believing that the Wilderness of Paran comprised the whole Desert of Et Tíh, and that Mount Paran was the southernmost portion of the mountain plateau in the north-east, at present inhabited by the 'Azázimeh Arabs, and known as Jebel Magráh."[7]

[1] Geogr., lib. v. cap. 17, sect. 3.
[2] St. Jerome, Comment. in Abucuc, lib. ii. c. 3, v. 3.
[3] Plin. Hist. Nat., lib. xxxvii. 40.
[4] Lepsius's Letters, xxxiii. n. [5] Desert of the Exodus, p. 20.
[6] See Ebers's Durch Gosen zum Sinai, pp. 189-208.
[7] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, p. 509.

What "reminiscence," then, Pharan or Feiran, near Mount Serbal, can possibly give of Mount Magráh, some hundred miles distant from it, must surely be "evident" to the mind of Professor Palmer alone. As for the German Professor, though he asserts that "the name of Firān, formerly Pharan, is indeed evidently the same as Peiran," he makes the strange avowal that[1] "it is equally certain that this name has altered its meaning with reference to the locality;" which assertion, as far as I can understand it, seems to signify that the classical and modern name does not correspond to the Biblical, which is a virtual denial of their identity,[2] represented by the two names.

And Josephus,[3] as quoted by Lepsius, when speaking of Simon of Gerasa, says that he 'overran the Accrabatene toparchy, and the places that reached as far as the Great Idumæa; for he built a wall at a certain village called Nain, and made use of that as a fortress for his own party's security; and *at the valley called Paran* he enlarged many of the caves, and many others he found ready for his purpose;' and Robinson, speaking of the Paran of Ptolemy, and that of Eusebius and Jerome,

[1] Lepsius's Letters, xxxiii. note.

[2] See Ebers's Durch Gosen zum Sinai, *ut sup.*

[3] Wars of the Jews, iv. 9, 4.

remarks, "The valley of Pharan mentioned by Josephus is obviously a different place, somewhere in the vicinity of the Dead Sea; perhaps connected with the mountain and Desert of Paran so often spoken of in the Old Testament, adjacent to Kadish."[1]

As regards the most important spot in the history of the Exodus, Mount Sinai itself, it has to be remarked, that when the Jews, and after them the Christians of Egypt, began to consider and to investigate the topography of the regions which they connected with that great national event, namely, those contiguous to Egypt, they probably, in the first instance, indiscriminately applied the designation of Sinai or Horeb to the whole of the lofty range of the Black Mountains (*Μέλανα Ὄρη*) of the Greco-Pelusian geographer, Claudius Ptolemy;[2] which range might reasonably be regarded from a distance as a single mountain-mass, culminating in the peak of the Um Shaumer, with an elevation of 8449 feet above the sea.[3]

[1] See Numb. xiii. 26. Biblical Researches, i. 593.

[2] Geogr., lib. v. cap. 17, sect. 3.

[3] According to the Ordnance Survey of the peninsula, Jebel Katarina has an elevation of 8536 feet, or 87 feet more than Um Shaumer; but as it stands somewhat farther towards the east, and thus out of the direct line of the chain, it loses in appearance some of its height. But both are surpassed by Jebel Zebir, which is the highest peak in the peninsula, reaching a height of 8551 feet. See Account of the Survey, Pt. 1, App. 11, Tables I., II.

But it would not have been long, especially after the persecution of the professors of the new faith had caused them to flee for safety into the desert, before some one of the mountain-peaks would have been singled out as being specifically that on which the Law was delivered to Moses in the sight of the children of Israel. "And be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly" (Exod. xix. 11, 17, 18). It is, therefore, quite natural that Jebel Serbal should have been originally identified by the Coptic, or Egyptian Christians, with the Mountain of the Law: for it is the first lofty mountain, being 6734 feet high, that the fugitives would fall in with on their way out of Egypt: it is an isolated peak, and in a superficial manner it readily answers to the general requirements of the Scripture narrative. It even appears to have been a "high

place" of the native Arab tribes, who made pilgrimages to it, and offered sacrifices on it, before the Christian hermits applied it to their own religious uses, and built upon it what must be regarded as the oldest convent within the peninsula.

It was the traveller Burckhardt who first suggested the priority of Jebel Serbal, and his reasoning on the subject is most cogent, if not absolutely conclusive. His words are:[1] "It will be recollected that no inscriptions are found either on the Mountain of Moses [he refers to *Jebel Musa*, the present traditional Mount Sinai] or on Mount St. Catherine; and that those which are found in the Ledja Valley at the foot of Djebel Katerin, are not to be traced above the rock, from which the water is said to have issued, and appear only to be the work of pilgrims, who visited that rock. From these circumstances, I am persuaded that Mount Serbal was at one period the chief place of pilgrimage in the peninsula: and that it was then considered the mountain where Moses received the tables of the law; though I am equally convinced, from a perusal of the Scriptures, that the

[1] Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, &c., p. 609, 4to edit., 1822. See also Lepsius's Letters, p. 533, Horner's trans., 1853.

Israelites encamped in the Upper Sinai, and that either Djebel Mousa or Mount St. Catherine is the real Horeb. It is not at all impossible that the proximity of Serbal to Egypt may at one period have caused that mountain to be the Horeb of the pilgrims, and that the establishment of the convent in its present situation, which was probably chosen from motives of security, may have led to the transferring of that honour to Djebel Mousa. At present, neither the monks of Mount Sinai nor those of Cairo consider Mount Serbal as the scene of any of the events of sacred history: nor have the Bedouins any tradition among them respecting it; but it is possible that if the Byzantine writers were thoroughly examined, some mention might be found of this mountain, which I believe was never before visited by any European traveller."

Subsequent investigations have established the sagacity and general correctness of the German traveller's remarks. The fact that the so-called Sinaitic Inscriptions are plentiful on and about Jebel Serbal, whilst none, or scarcely any, are found on Jebel Musa or Jebel Katharina, demonstrates that the first-named mountain was the original object of religious pilgrimages; and the fact that these inscriptions were principally, if not entirely,

the work of native heathen pilgrims, who came there to offer sacrifices and thank-offerings,[1] just as the Mohammedan Beduins do on the self-same mountain at the present day, and as they do on Jebel Bághir, or Jebel e' Nùr (Mountain of Light), which I have lately discovered, and which I regard as the true Mount Sinai, must undoubtedly be understood to indicate that Serbal was at an early period the centre of an ancient Pagan worship; though there is nothing in the character of any of those inscriptions, as now deciphered, to connect them in any way with the age of the Exodus, or any period at all approaching it. On the contrary, the general opinion now is that not any of the inscriptions are older than the first centuries of the Christian era, and that they bear no reference to any earlier historical period.

The actual claim of Jebel Serbal to be the true Mount Sinai was first advanced by Professor Lepsius in the year 1845, and advocated with much learning in his "Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Peninsula of Sinai," published in Germany in 1852, and in an English translation in 1853. It has since been ably maintained by several travellers and scholars, both in England

[1] See Reise in Abyssinien, von Ed. Rüppell, vol. i. p. 127.

and on the Continent, the latest of them being Dr. Ebers, in his work, "Durch Gosen zum Sinai," published at Leipzig in 1872.

It is scarcely necessary to explain that the arguments of Lepsius and his followers in proof of the superior claim of Jebel Serbal over Jebel Musa are based on the gratuitous assumption that one of the two must necessarily be the true Mount Sinai. As, however, I think I shall be able to show the claim of the one mountain has no better foundation than that of the other, it would be altogether beside my purpose to discuss their respective merits. All that concerns me is the fact, which those scholars have sufficiently established, that Jebel Serbal was deemed to be Mount Sinai before that honour was acquired by Jebel Musa.

The ancient convent in Wady Sigillíyeh, now in ruins, which was seen by Burckhardt, and has recently been visited by Professor Palmer and my friend Major Wilson, points to a time when that on Jebel Musa had not come into existence: and there is every reason for concurring in the suggestion of the German traveller, that the proximity of Serbal to Egypt, which in the first instance caused that mountain to be regarded as

the Sinai of the pilgrims, and led to the building of the convent, became at a later period a cause of insecurity and peril to the monks who inhabited it; and in consequence to have led to the founding of the convent which was erected on the more secluded Jebel Musa, as a place of greater security:—in like manner as the scene of St. Paul's conversion, which was on the highroad from Jerusalem to Damascus, and therefore necessarily on the south-west of the latter city, has,—for the convenience of pilgrims,—been shifted to the neighbourhood of the Latin Convent, on the *east* side of Damascus;[1] or as in the more glaring case of the scene of the Annunciation, the Holy House having been bodily transported from Nazareth first into Dalmatia, and thence again to Loreto.

It may even be, that the transfer of Sinai, or Horeb, from Jebel Serbal to Jebel Musa was not made directly, but through the intervention of Jebel *Katarina*, which mountain, as is shown by the "Sinaitic" inscriptions found by Burckhardt in the Ledja valley at its foot, was at some time or other certainly regarded as the true Mountain

[1] See Mrs. Beke's work, "Jacob's Flight," p. 88, London, Longmans & Co., 1865.

of the Law, as it is still deemed to be by the traveller Rüppell.[1] Indeed its superior elevation over all the other mountain peaks (except that of Jebel Zebir) within the peninsula, namely, 8536 feet (Burckhardt seems to favour Jebel Katarina), against Jebel Serbal, 6734 feet, and Jebel Musa, 7363 feet; even the giant Um Shaumer, 8449 feet, might be regarded as favouring its claim to be Josephus's "highest mountain within the region wherein it is situate," did but other circumstances combine to countenance such a claim.

In the consideration of this shifting from time to time of the name Sinai or Horeb from one mountain peak to another within the peninsula, the especial point to be borne in mind is the order of succession, and this clearly appears to be—first, Serbal; secondly, Jebel Katarina; thirdly, Jebel Musa; and now, of late years, Ras Sufsâfeh. Such being the case, it is manifest that everything like an appeal to *tradition* must be cast to the winds, except perhaps in the case of Jebel Serbal alone, which mountain has at all events the special and exclusive merit of having been deemed to be the Mountain of God before the upstart Jebel Musa was even thought of as such.

[1] Rüppell's Reise in Abyssinien, vol. i. p. 120.

Of the fact that, in the first ages of the Christian era, Jebel Serbal, and not Jebel Musa, was considered to be Mount Sinai, the particulars extracted from the works of early Greek ecclesiastical writers now about to be related will leave no room for question.

It must be premised that Ptolemy, when describing the peninsula between the Heroöpolitan and Elanitic gulfs (the gulfs of Suez and Akaba, in which the city of Pharan was situate), mentions among the tribes dwelling to the westward of the Black Mountains (the Sinaitic range) towards Egypt, the Saracens (*Σαρακηνοί*), the Pharanites[1] (*Φαρανῖται*), and the Raïthenoi (*Ραϊθηνοί*), the last named being towards the mountains of Arabia Felix.

There is great difficulty in reconciling the details of Ptolemy's topography of this region with our present precise knowledge of it, but sufficient is known to enable us to identify the city of Pharan with the modern Feiran, near Jebel Serbal, where the ruins of the ancient city still exist—a view of them being given by Laborde in his work, "Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée,"[2]—these ruins being in the neighbourhood of the ancient copper mines, whence the

[1] Geogr., vi. 7, 21, v. 17, 3.

[2] Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée, p. 69, Paris, 1830.

Egyptians obtained the *Lapis Pharanites* or turquoise; whilst Ptolemy's Raïthenoi must be the inhabitants of the district containing the modern town of Tor, called Ῥαιθοὺ by the Greek Christians, both in ancient and modern times. The name of Saracens, though now the appellation of the Arabian invaders of the Western world generally (as will next be shown), was limited in the early ages to the tribes dwelling at, or in the vicinity of Pharan.

As early as A.D. 250, Dionysius of Alexandria speaks of the monasteries *of Sinai* as being the refuge of Egyptian Christians in times of persecution, where they were often attacked and made slaves by the Saracens or Arabs.[1]

The first hermit of whom we have any specific knowledge is Sylvanus, who lived about A.D. 365, and is called by Tillemont, Abbot of Mount Sinai.

But the great agent in Christianising the coun-

[1] See Gallandii Bibliotheca Vet. Patrum, vol. iii. p. 516.

Dionysius's text makes no definite mention of monasteries—he seems to intimate that many Christians perished in the mountain wilds, while others were carried off by Arabs and put to ransom.

Galland's note on εἰς τὸ Ἀράβιον ὄρος:—"Mons est ita dictus, cujus meminit Herodotus, quem Ptolemæus et alii Troicum vocant. Male ergo Christophorsonus montem Arabiæ vertit. Paullo post Arabicus dicitur (τὸ Ἀραβικὸν ὄρος), ob vicinitatem Arabum ita nominatus."

The passage occurs in a letter to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl., lib. vi. cap. 41, 42, and 44.—ED.

tries south of Palestine, and in introducing the monastic life into these regions, was Hilarion,[1] a disciple of St. Anthony, who was born A.D. 291, at Thabatha, near Gaza, and died A.D. 371, two years before the slaughter of Raitha, hereafter to be related.

In the time of the Emperor Julian (360-3) the deserts of Sinai were beginning to teem with ascetics, whom the example of Hilarion had attracted to the monastic life. Among these ascetics was Nicon, who is supposed to be the same as is honoured by the Greeks on the 26th November, and of whom the following story is told by Nilus, who, like Nicon, is a saint of the Greek calendar:—Nicon was dwelling on Mount Sinai, when the seducer of the daughter of an inhabitant of Pharan persuaded her to accuse that venerable man of the crime. On this the father of the girl went after Nicon to kill him; but on his raising his sword in the act of striking him, his hand became withered. Not deterred by this miracle, the father accused the saint before the priests of Pharan, who caused him to be beaten, and would have banished him from the country, but that he

[1] See his life written by Jerome, Vita S. Hilarionis, Hieronymi Opera, tom. ii. p. 30, Patrolog. Cursus, Migne, Paris, 1849.

asked permission to remain in order to do penance. For three years he remained excommunicated, no one being allowed to speak to him; and during that period he came every Sunday to the church with the other penitents to beseech the faithful to pray for him. At length it pleased God to make known Nicon's innocence; the true seducer of the girl, possessed by the devil, openly confessed before the whole congregation his crime and his calumny. On this all the inhabitants of the place went to demand pardon of the saint, who readily granted it, but refused to remain longer among them, inasmuch as not a single one of them had shown any charity or compassion for him.

Ammonius relates the following anecdote:[1]— "A vessel from Aila was stranded on the shores of the Avalitic gulf (the modern Gulf of Zeila). The people of this district (whom the historian designates by the convenient but much-abused term Blemmyes) seized on the vessel, and (being accustomed to navigation), resolved to use it in a piratical excursion against the wealthy city of Clysma. They sailed up the Arabian Gulf (or Red Sea), and on entering into the Heroöpolitan Gulf, were driven on the eastern shore, instead

[1] See Ammonius, Tillemont, vii. 576, 577.

of the Egyptian, to which their voyage tended. They landed at *Ratha* (the modern Tor), and after the massacre of part of the inhabitants, carried away the rest as captives. Being driven a second time on the coast of Ratha, they murdered their remaining captives, but were fortunately overtaken by *Obedian* before they could resume their voyage. The king having heard of their former landing [had] hastened to Ratha at the head of a small and select body of troops, and falling upon the African savages, slaughtered them to a man." The date of this occurrence is stated to be the year 373 of the Christian era.

In the curious work entitled, "Narrative of the Monastic Monk Nilus," touching the massacre of the monks on Mount Sinai,[1] an account is given of an occurrence similar to that recorded by Ammonius. The writer describes how he and his son Theodulus were living as anchorites with others on Mount Sinai. The position of their residence was on the mountain itself, and lower down dwelt other hermits at the spot called "the Bush;" it being supposed to be that at which Moses was first addressed by the Almighty.[2]

[1] Narrative of the Monastic Monk Nilus, Paris, 1639, Narratio. iv.
[2] Exod. iii. 4.

Nilus and his son were in the habit of visiting these other hermits, and one day when they were supping with them, the priest of the place, named likewise Theodulus, speaking with more than his usual kindness, said, "How do we know whether we shall ever sup together again before we die?" The result showed the pertinency of what he thus said; for early on the morrow, when hardly the morning hymns had been sung, they found themselves attacked by a band of Saracens, who killed the priest Theodulus, and his companion Paul, an old man, with a boy named John who waited on them, and then allowed all the other men to escape, but retained the boys. Those who were liberated hastened to gain the summit of the mountain, which the Saracens did not dare to approach, under the persuasion that the Majesty of God resided there, it being there that He appeared to the Israelites. Nilus was at first unwilling to accept his liberty whilst his son was kept a prisoner, but at the solicitation of the latter, he also escaped to the top of the mountain, whence he had the grief of seeing his son carried away by his captors, who went on pillaging other places and killing a great number of other persons. Nilus and the others who had fled to the top of

the mountain came down from it in the evening to bury the bodies of their slaughtered brethren. Life had not quite left the priest Theodulus, who, before breathing his last, had strength to exhort them to worship God without fear, and to give them the kiss of peace. After having buried them, they reached the city of Pharan before the morrow.[1]

In page 87 of the original work, Nilus speaks of the Senate of that city, which was also in his time the seat of a bishop. [But how can this be if Moses was the first bishop ?] Nilus has usually been supposed to have lived some time during the fifth century, and the slaughter of the monks on Mount Sinai related by Nilus has consequently been supposed to be a repetition of the event related by Ammonius. But there is no good reason for imagining it to be a different occurrence.

In A.D. 372 or 373 the prince was Obedian, who died soon after, and was succeeded by his wife, Mavia or Moawiyah, who, ten years after Julian had carried the Roman arms triumphantly beyond the frontier to the capital of Persia,—where, however, he was slain in the moment of victory,—defeated the Roman forces in Phœnicia. *Socrates* relates that no sooner had the Emperor (Valens)

[1] Tillemont, xiv. 200–203.

departed from Antioch, than the Saracens, who had before been in alliance with the Romans, revolted from him, being led by Mavia, their Queen, whose husband (Obedian?) was then dead. All the regions of the East, therefore, were at that time ravaged by the Saracens; but their fury was repressed by the interference of Divine Providence, in the manner I am about to relate. A person named Moses, a Saracen by birth, who led a monastic life in the desert, became exceedingly eminent for his piety, faith, and miracles. Mavia, the Queen of the Saracens, was therefore desirous that this person should be consecrated bishop over her nation, and promised on this condition to terminate the war. The Roman generals considering that a peace founded on such terms would be extremely advantageous, gave immediate directions for its ratification. *Moses was accordingly seized,* and brought from the desert to Alexandria, in order to his being initiated into the sacerdotal functions; but, on his presentation for that purpose to Lucius, who at that time presided over the churches in that city, he refused to be ordained by him, protesting against it in these words:—"I account myself indeed unworthy of the sacred office; but if the exigences of the state require my

bearing it, it shall not be by Lucius laying his hand upon me, for it has been filled with blood." Moses having expressed himself in this manner, was taken by his friends to the mountains, that he might receive ordination from the bishops who lived in exile there. His consecration terminated the Saracenic war; and so scrupulously did Mavia observe the peace thus entered into with the Romans, that she gave her daughter in marriage to Victor, the commander in chief of the Roman army.[1]

The same story is related by Theodoret substantially in slightly different terms. His words are:—"At this period the tribe of Ishmaelites ravaged the provinces situated on the frontier of the empire. They were led by Mavia, who, notwithstanding her sex, possessed masculine intrepidity. After several engagements she made peace with the Romans, and having received the light of the knowledge of God, she stipulated that a certain man, named Moses, who dwelt on the borders of Egypt and Palestine, might be ordained bishop of her nation. Valens acceded to her request, and desired that the holy man should be conveyed to Alexandria, and that he should there

[1] Socrates, Eccl. Hist., book iv. chap. 36.

receive the holy rite of ordination, for this city was nearer her place of residence than any other. After his arrival at Alexandria, when he found Lucius desired to lay hands upon him for the purpose of ordination, he said, 'I account myself indeed unworthy of the sacred office; but if the exigences of the state require my bearing it, it shall not be by Lucius laying his hand upon me, for it has been filled with blood.' Lucius was deeply incensed, and wished to put him to death; but not daring to renew a war which had been terminated, he ordered him to be conveyed to the other bishops, by whom he desired to be ordained. After having received, in addition to his fervent faith, the archi-episcopal dignity, he, by his apostolic doctrines, and by the working of miracles, led many to the knowledge of the truth."[1]

It could not, however, have been till some considerable time after the death of this saintly bishop Moses that he became confounded (whether intentionally or through ignorance is not at all material), with the great Lawgiver of the Israelites, so as to allow the mountain called after the former to become "traditionally" associated with the latter. But when once the ball was set rolling,

[1] Theod., Eccl. Hist., book iv. chap. 23.

the Greek ecclesiastics were at no loss in finding materials to increase its bulk, till at length almost the whole Christian world has been brought to look on Jebel Musa—the Mountain of (Bishop) Moses—as the veritable Mount Sinai.

From the foregoing anecdotes, the general truth of which cannot reasonably be questioned, it is manifest that, in the time of Nicon, Nilus, and Ammonius, Mount Sinai was considered to be in the immediate vicinity of Pharan. Therefore it could have been no other than Jebel Serbal, which is distant only about five miles from Wady Feiran. To suppose the incidents related could have referred to Jebel Musa, which lies more than twenty miles in a direct line from that spot, would render the whole story inconsistent, and consequently impossible. That Jebel Serbal continued to be regarded as the true Mount Sinai till the beginning of the sixth century is proved by the statement of the Coptic monk Cosmas Indicopleustes, who then visited the Holy Mountain. The testimony of this traveller is too precise and explicit to be open to any question. He relates that, landing at Raithu (*Ραϊθού*), (the town of Ptolemy's *Ραϊθηνοί*, and the modern Tor), which was two days' journey from Sinai, he went along the Wady Hebron to Rephidim,

which is how called Pharan, where he was at the termination of his Sinaitic journey. From this spot, he says, Moses went with the elders "unto Horeb, which is in the Sinaic (Mountain), the same being about six thousand paces (six miles) from Paran."[1] And in a subsequent passage he distinctly affirms that he journeyed on foot to all these places (ὡς αὐτὸς ἐγὼ πεζεύσας τοὺς τόπους μαρτυρῶ, "as I myself, having visited these places on foot, bear witness").[2] And it was, as he journeyed on foot, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, that he saw the inscriptions which he supposed to have been written by the children of Israel, and which, in consequence of this supposition, are known as the Sinaitic Inscriptions. Now, although the distance of two days' journey from Tor corresponds equally well both to Jebel Musa and to Jebel Serbal, the distance to Pharan of six thousand paces, and the presence of the Sinaitic inscriptions, can apply to the latter mountain alone. So far, all is clearly in favour of Jebel Serbal.

But on the other hand, it appears not less clear from the Greek writer Procopius, who was the

[1] Topograph. Christ., lib. v. sect. 196, apud Migne, Patrolog. Cursus, vol. lxxxviii., Series Græca.

[2] Ut supra, lib. v. sect. 205.

contemporary of the last-named writer, Cosmas, that Jebel Musa had at that time begun to be regarded as the true Mount Sinai. He, Procopius, says that in the third Palestine, which was formerly called Arabia, is a barren mountain named Sinai, which is as if it were suspended over the Red Sea. This mountain was inhabited by monks, who, living in pious solitude and in the meditation of death, and having no wants in this world, required nothing more; so that all the Emperor Justinian could do for them was to build them a church, which he dedicated to the Mother of God. This church, says Procopius,[1] was not erected on the summit of the mountain, where Moses received the Law, but far below; because, no one could pass the night on the summit on account of the noises heard there, which caused them to fear and tremble: in this agreeing with the reports of Ammonius and Nilus, which themselves are in accordance with the tradition recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus. Procopius adds, that Justinian also caused a very strong castle to be built at the foot of the mountain, in which he placed a sufficient garrison, in order to prevent

[1] Procop. de Ædificiis, v. 8, ap. Corpus Script. Hist. Byzant., ed. Dindorf.

the inroads into Palestine of the barbarian Saracens who inhabited these desert regions.

The erection of this castle by Justinian had evidently some connection with the treaty which that Emperor made with the prince of the Saracens, called by Procopius,[1] Abocharagos, who, submitting himself to the Emperor, surrendered his country to him, and was in return appointed by him Governor (Phylarch) of the Saracens of Palestine; an arrangement which, in the estimation of the historian, gave the Emperor nothing but a nominal sovereignty. If this Saracen prince, Abocharabos, was a successor of Obedian and Mavia, whose seat of government was at Pharan, it might almost be conjectured that the Mount Sinai overhanging the Red Sea, on which the Emperor built the church dedicated to the Mother of God, and at the foot of which he erected a fortress, might still have been Jebel Serbal, and not Jebel Musa. But without insisting on this, it will be sufficient to say that the Church of the Virgin Mother of God, described by Procopius as being some way down the mountain's side, cannot have stood on the site of the present Convent of the Transfiguration on Jebel Musa, but must rather be represented by the existing

[1] Procop. de Bello Persicos, i. 19, sect. 3.

Chapel of the Virgin,[1] on Jebel Serbal, which stands at some distance above the convent, whilst the convent itself represents Justinian's castle at the foot of the mountain. The "tradition" of the monks of the convent, that the Chapel of the Virgin is of later date, is manifestly only a part of the general system of fraud and imposture in which the whole history of the convent is involved.

After the lapse of so many ages, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to determine the actual circumstances under which Jebel Musa came to supersede Jebel Serbal as Mount Sinai. But the change may well have been caused, as Ritter suggests, by party views and jealousy between the monks of Constantinople and Alexandria. It is certainly remarkable that the rival claims of the two mountains should have been in existence at the same moment; those of Jebel Serbal being evidenced by the Coptic monk, Cosmas Indicopleustes, and those of Jebel Musa by the Greek historian, Procopius, both writing at the beginning of the sixth century. But the fact that the monks of the convent on the former mountain were Egyptians, or Copts, and that those on Jebel Musa were orthodox Greeks, would sufficiently explain

[1] See Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i. pp. 97, 102, 104.

not only the rivalry between the two, but the eventual victory of the latter. It is quite certain that the Greek monks would not have been at all scrupulous as to the means they employed to gain the victory over their heterodox rivals. The deliberate fraud and falsehood of the Greek clergy, from the earliest ages of Christianity, are matters of history. In my work, "Jesus the Messiah,"[1] I have adduced some striking examples of this, to which I will refer my readers.

There can be no question as to the fact that Pharan, near Mount Serbal, was the first Christian centre of the Peninsula, and that the church founded by the Emperor Justinian,[2] on Jebel Musa, was dependent on the Bishop of Pharan, and so continued during several centuries, which would hardly have been the case had Jebel Musa, and not Jebel Serbal, been from the commencement deemed to be Mount Sinai.

The two inscriptions on the wall of the convent on Jebel Musa afford another instance of Greek fraud and imposture. These inscriptions, which are in Greek and Arabic, assert that this convent was built by the Emperor Justinian in the 527th year of the Christian era. But, according to my

[1] Jesus the Messiah, chaps. iii., iv., London, Trübner & Co., 1872.
[2] Procopius's Life of Justinian, cap. ii. sect. 1.

erudite friend, Dr. Wetzstein, formerly Prussian Consul at Damascus, the written characters of the Arabic inscription indicate that it could not have existed before the year 550 of the Hegira (A.D. 1172), and no earlier date can be attributed to the corresponding Greek inscription; so that the authority of these fabricated records is worthless. There seems to be a *third* inscription of older date, which Lepsius could not copy (Lepsius's Letters, p. 553).

Considering the views I entertain respecting the real position of the Mountain of the Law, it may perhaps be deemed to have been a work of supererogation on my part to go into these particulars concerning Jebel Musa, the traditional Mount Sinai, and the convent thereon; but I do so in order to demonstrate to the general reader the worthlessness of the monkish traditions connected with the same.

The intrinsic claims of Jebel Musa to be the Mountain of the Law are as worthless as its traditional ones. So far from being the highest mountain, as Josephus styles it, Jebel Musa is invisible from every quarter;[1] it is almost concealed and buried; it is neither distinguished by height,

[1] Robinson, vol. i. pp. 103–106. Bartlett, Forty Days in the Desert, p. 57. Desert of the Exodus, p. 112.

form, position, or any other peculiarity. Professor Palmer admits, that "the view from the summit [of Jebel Musa] does not embrace so comprehensive a prospect of the Peninsula as that from the more commanding peaks of Katarina or Serbal;"[1] and it is absolutely destitute of verdure, cultivation, running streams, and even of abundant springs, and with no resources whatsoever. In fact, it is physically impossible for the children of Israel to have remained long encamped there.

So poor indeed are the pretensions of the monkish Jebel Musa to be Mount Sinai, that no scientific and intelligent traveller who has visited the spot, and who is not enslaved by the local "traditions," but dares to think for himself, can avoid seeking for some other mountain-peak in preference to what he feels to be an impostor; Lepsius choosing Jebel Serbal; Rüppell, Jebel Katarine; and more recently, Dr. Edward Robinson[2] taking on himself to substitute for it the neighbouring more northerly peak of Ras Sufsâfeh.

Even the members of the recent Ordnance Survey of the Peninsula, who went out to perform the task they have so ably accomplished with the pre-

[1] Desert of the Exodus, p. 108, and Exod. xix. 16–18.

[2] Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i. pp. 106, 107.

conceived idea that Jebel Musa must be the true Sinai, have found themselves constrained to abandon it in favour of Ras Sufsâfeh.

Conscious, however, of the danger of relinquishing the "traditional" identification of Jebel Musa with the Sinai of Scripture, they have found it necessary to give to the former name an extension which in nowise belongs to it, which never existed before their time, and cannot honestly be maintained. Professor Palmer, in his work "The Desert of the Exodus," p. 111, thus states the case in what I cannot but regard as a most disingenuous manner. "Before entering upon the question of the exact scene of the delivery of the Law" (says he), "it will be necessary for me to explain what is meant by the summit of Sinai. *Jebel Musa is not a single peak*, but a huge mountain block, about two miles in length, and one mile in breadth, with a narrow valley on either side, a somewhat larger one at the south-eastern extremity, and a spacious plain at the north-eastern end. A well-watered basin or plateau occupies the centre, and this is surrounded by numerous peaks, of which two only, those at the extremities, are prominent in height or position." And the writer of a letter in the "Times" of April the 3d, 1874, under the signature

of "One who has been there"[1] (seemingly one of the surveying party), asserts in like manner, that Ras Sufsâfeh is "simply one of the buttresses of the great mountain known *as a whole as Jebel Musa;*" and he goes on to say, that "any one who has stood on that wondrous cliff, as I have, and looked down on the great plain of Er Râhah, stretched out at his feet, and rising gradually, as it recedes from the base, like the pit of a theatre, cannot fail, with the Bible narrative in his hands, to recognise it as the undoubted spot where the Israelitish encampment stood."

To this, however, it has to be categorically replied, that every one who has been on the spot or at all studied the subject knows perfectly well that it is not the fact that "Jebel Musa is not a single peak, but a large mountain block," &c.; or that Ras Sufsâfeh is "simply one of the buttresses of the great mountain known, as a whole, as Jebel Musa;" for that there does not exist, and never did exist, any great "mountain block" bearing the name of Jebel Musa, which name belongs to the separate peak at the southern end of the mountain block known as the monkish Sinai, and *to that peak alone,* on and about which the whole of the tra-

[1] The Times, 3d April 1874.

ditional identifications of the delivery of the Law are congregated;[1] and the Ordnance Survey Map shows marked the two separate and distinct peaks of Jebel Musa with an elevation of 7363 feet, and Ras Sufsâfeh with an elevation of 6541 feet;[2] the former of those peaks being considered to be Mount Sinai, and the latter Mount Horeb; and, further, in the map and sections in Professor Palmer's work, just referred to,[3] the distinction between the two peaks is plainly shown, though it is ingeniously contrived to make the general designation of Mount Sinai comprehend the two, and even to represent the name "Jebel Musa" as applicable to both.

Seeing then the utter uncertainty of the whole question of the position of Mount Sinai, which has, if possible, been increased rather than lessened by the labours of the Ordnance Surveyors, however valuable the results of those labours must be in other respects, it appears to me, as I have already declared in the "Times" of March 30, 1874, that "the only issue out of the many difficulties which have perplexed earnest but anxious minds," and the only sure way to "solve questions that have

[1] Exod. xix., xx.

[2] See Dr. Beke's letter in the Times of April 9, 1874.

[3] Desert of the Exodus.

thrown discredit on the truth of a portion of the Bible history," the confirmation of which was in fact the main object of the Ordnance Survey,[1] is to reopen the whole question, and to consider impartially and reasonably the probable position of the Mountain of the Law upon the basis of my theory that the *Mitzraim* of the Bible is *not* the "Egypt" of Profane History; and that the Yam Suf or Red Sea, through which the Israelites passed in their Exodus, is the same "Red Sea in the Land of Edom"[2] that was navigated by the Israelitish and Tyrean fleets five centuries later—namely, the Gulf of Akaba, whence I have just returned,—the Gulf of Suez having been as little known to Moses as it was to Solomon and Hiram.

Before entering upon the discussion of my theory, or upon the narrative of the journey which I have undertaken for the purpose of establishing its correctness; it is expedient that I should state, as a most important preliminary, what I conceive to be a paramount and fatal objection to the identification either wholly or in part of the Peninsula of Pharan, between the gulfs of Suez and Akaba, with the wilderness of the Exodus.

[1] See Athenæum, Sept. 26, 1868. [2] 1 Kings ix. 26.

According to the vulgar interpretation of the Scripture history, we are called on to believe that Moses, when he fled from the face of Pharaoh, took refuge within a district in which there was a colony of Egyptians, with copper mines, which, as the hieroglyphics then show, were worked by them, not merely before, but actually at the time of the Exodus; and further, that the Israelites, who were constantly in a state of insubordination, and even rebellion, and anxiously longing to return into Mitzraim ("Egypt"), were, with a view to their liberation from the house of bondage, deliberately led by their inspired legislator into the *cul-de-sac* between the two gulfs, where they were almost within sight of Egypt, where they must have come in contact with the Egyptian colonists and miners, and whence they would at any time have had not the slightest difficulty in returning to that country.

Professor Palmer, whilst forced to admit that "it is most improbable that Moses, well versed as he was in all the 'learning of the Egyptians,' and acquainted with all the details of their political system, would have led the hosts of Israel into direct contact with those enemies from whom they

were fleeing,"[1] seeks to get over the difficulty by representing it as merely a question of whether or not the Israelites were conducted by their inspired leader directly past the very spots at Sarábít el Khádim, at Wady Magháral, and Wady Nash, where the copper and turquoise mines were being worked; and he argues, that "as we read in the sacred narrative of no collision with their late taskmasters after the overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea, we may fairly conclude that they did not pass by any of those roads, which must inevitably have brought them into the very midst of a large Egyptian military settlement."[2] And having thus slurred over this difficulty, he complacently remarks, "This, therefore, considerably narrows the question by disposing of at least two of the principal routes by which the Israelites could have approached Mount Sinai."[3]

But let the line of march of the Israelites be assumed to be such as not to lead to any actual "collision with their late taskmasters," it could not avoid being within fearful proximity to some of the Egyptian settlements, and even a *détour* of several miles would not have allowed them to

[1] Desert of the Exodus, p. 232. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

pass unobserved the outposts, except on Professor Palmer's monstrous supposition that all the Israelitish host fell in with was some "little knot of worshippers who mayhap were bowing down to Apis while the great pilgrim Father passed."[1] How long these worshippers had to continue bowed down whilst the host of the Israelites passed by them, is left to the imagination of the reader, who is further called on to believe that their inspired leader thereby fancied himself and the people hidden from the view of the Egyptian soldiery; even as the ostrich is said to fancy it conceals itself from the view of the hunter by hiding its head in the bushes and leaving its whole body exposed. In the consideration of this, to me insurmountable difficulty, it must always be borne in mind that the children of Israel remained some time encamped at Elim,[2] wherever it may please the traditionists to fix that place; and that they did not reach the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai, till the fifteenth day of the second month,[3] that is, one month after the Exodus; that it was yet a fortnight more ere they encamped before the Mount;[4] that they remained stationary

[1] The Desert of the Exodus, p. 45.
[2] Exod. xv. 27.
[3] Exod. xvi. 1.
[4] Exod. xix. 1, 2.

there till the twentieth day of the second month of the second year,[1] or close on a whole twelvemonth; and during the whole of this period, even Jebel Musa itself, the extremest point of the imagined sojourn of the Israelites within the Peninsula, is less than forty miles from the Egyptian mining settlements! Is this within the range of the wildest imagination?

Such ideas as these are so utterly preposterous, that it would be inconceivable how they could be entertained for a single instant, were it not for the daily instances we unhappily meet with of the blindness with which the "authority" of puerile tradition is deferred to, even by persons of great learning, and otherwise of the most enlarged minds.

It is true that the objection here raised is, in its direct application, far more cogent in the case of Jebel Serbal than of Jebel Katarina, or Jebel Musa, inasmuch as the former is in the immediate vicinity of the copper mines, and also of "another spot in the Peninsula," which we are told was a position of great importance long before the time of Moses, and even in his days, but has lost it since that time, namely, the harbour of Abu Zelimeh, in the Gulf of Suez, within forty miles

[1] Numb. x. 11.

of the summit of Jebel Serbal, by which spot, according to the Ordnance Survey party, the Israelites passed, inasmuch as they "were unanimously of opinion that the Israelites must have taken the lower route by the sea-shore,"[1] and than which spot, in the estimation of Professor Lepsius, "there was no more convenient landing-place to connect Egypt with those colonies"[2] of miners. Lepsius complacently records how the sandy plain on the western side of the mountain "disclosed to him across the sea a glorious prospect of the opposite coast, and the Egyptian chain of mountains bounding it,"[3]—a most marvellous locality indeed for Sinai, at the foot of which the Israelites had to remain so long encamped!

But notwithstanding the force of the direct application of the objection here raised, it is even more fatal to the pretensions of both Jebel Katarina and Jebel Musa; because such pretensions are subordinate to those of Jebel Serbal, and cannot have arisen until after the traditional repute of the latter, if not entirely extinct, was already on the wane, and therefore could the more easily be superseded by its younger, more pretentious, and

[1] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, p. 238.
[2] Lepsius's Letters, p. 305. [3] Ibid., p. 296.

(as the mendacious inscriptions on the convent wall and Eutychius's false statement testify) more unscrupulous rival.

Having said this much, I feel myself dispensed from taking any further notice of all and singular the rival mountain summits within the region between the Gulf of Suez and Akaba, which has hitherto erroneously borne the name of the Peninsula of Mount Sinai, but which I propose to call henceforth the Peninsula of Pharan—the country of the *Lapis Pharanites* (turquoise) of Pliny—and I give it the name it bore in the earliest ages of Christianity, as a standing protest and memorial against the identifications of any place within that Peninsula with the Paran of Scripture.

CHAPTER II.*

THE NON-IDENTITY OF THE MITZRAIM OF SCRIPTURE WITH THE EGYPT OF PROFANE HISTORY—ITS POSITION, AND THAT OF THE LAND OF MIDIAN.

HAVING proceeded to the consideration of the position of Mount Sinai, as a preliminary to the narrative of my journey for its discovery, it is requisite that I should say a few words on the subject of the situation of the Mitzraim of the Hebrew Scriptures, the land of bondage of the children of Israel, which, by the common assent of ages, is generally believed to be the Egypt of profane history, but which I have, during upwards of forty years, maintained to be a distinct and separate kingdom lying to the east of the Isthmus of Suez, and thence extending to the land of the Philistines: a kingdom which, in the course of time, lost its independent existence, and was merged in its more powerful and more fortunate western neighbour, Egypt, whilst it became itself "utterly waste and desolate," in accordance with

* Written by the late Dr. Beke, June 4, 1874.

the prophecies that had foretold its destruction. And in immediate relation to and connection with this translocation of the Land of Bondage, I have in like manner maintained that the *Yam Suf*, or Red Sea, through which the Israelites passed on their Exodus from Mitzraim, was the Sea of Edom, or Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, as is generally supposed.

Paradoxical as these opinions appeared when they were first enunciated in "Origines Biblicæ," and as they are still considered to be by the majority of scholars, there are, nevertheless, not a few persons whose judgment is not to be despised —and I am happy to say their number is daily increasing—who are convinced of the general correctness of such opinions; and I have further the satisfaction of knowing that not only my own researches, but likewise numerous facts bearing on the subject which have come to light since the publication of that work in 1834, have served to convince me that the opinions therein expressed are substantially true.

It would be quite out of place here to enter upon any lengthened discussion of my theory of the non-identity of the Mitzraim of the Pentateuch with the Egypt of profane history. Still, it is essential that

I should offer a few general remarks on the subject, in order to render intelligible to the general reader the views which I entertain respecting the position of Mount Sinai, and the history of the Exodus.

For this purpose, discarding all traditions whatsoever, we have to take the *simple statements of Holy Scripture as our sole, absolute, and exclusive guide.* And in the first place, we find it recorded in that inestimable canon of ethnology and geography handed down to us in the tenth chapter of Genesis, under the head of the children of Ham, that "Mitzraim begat Ludim . . . and Pathrusim and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim);"[1] from which we learn that the Philistines were a race of cognate origin with the Mitzrites, or, in fact, a branch of the great family of mankind classed under the latter generic name. Hence it may also be inferred in a general way that these kindred people were also neighbours.[2] The contiguity may be more clearly shown when the migrations of the Patriarch Abraham and his immediate descendants are taken into consideration. The early migrations of the Patriarch himself have formed the subject of special study on my part, resulting in a journey into Syria, undertaken by my wife and myself in

[1] Gen. x. 13, 14. [2] Exod. xiii. 17.

the year 1861–62; and in her work, "Jacob's Flight; or, a Pilgrimage to Harran, and thence in the Patriarch's Footsteps into the Promised Land,"[1] it is conclusively demonstrated that when Terah and his family "went forth from Ur-Casdim (Ur of the Chaldees) to go into the land of Canaan, and they came unto Haran and dwelt there,"[2] the place they thus removed to was not the celebrated town of Harran in Mesopotamia, according to tradition, but a recently discovered village near Damascus bearing the same name, the error respecting its position having been caused by the erroneous identification of "Aram Naharaim," or Aram of the Two Rivers, that is to say, "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus," with Mesopotamia, the country between the two rivers Euphrates and Tigris; the expression "Aram Naharaim" in Genesis xxiv. 10 being literally translated "Mesopotamia."

From Harran, in Aram of the Two Rivers, near Damascus, Terah's son, Abraham, was called to go into the land of Canaan, whither he was accompanied by his nephew Lot.[3] Their first station was Shechem,[4] whence they removed to near Bethel,

[1] Published by Longmans & Co., London, 1865.
[2] Gen. xi. 31. [3] Gen. xii. 1–4. [4] Gen. xii. 6.

where Abram "builded an altar to the Eternal,"[1] and seems to have made a lengthened stay, both before and after his journey into the South Country (Negeb), and Mitzraim, to which I have now to direct particular attention.

We first read that from Bethel the Patriarch "journeyed, going on still towards the south." (The Hebrew says, "in going and journeying," which does not affect the sense.) "And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Mitzraim to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land."[2] Without dwelling on what occurred in that country, we may go on to the following chapter, wherein it is stated, that "Abram went up out of Mitzraim[3]. . . . into the south;" that is to say, into the "Negeb," or south country, through which he had previously passed on his way to Mitzraim; and that he there "went on his journeys, from the south (Negeb) even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning."[4] Now, it is deserving of special consideration that the very word "Mitzraim," which, in the Septuagint Greek version, and all other versions that follow it, is retained as in

[1] Gen. xii. 17.
[2] Gen. xii. 9, 10.
[3] Gen. xiii. 1.
[4] Gen. xiii. 3.

the original Hebrew in the tenth chapter of the Book of Genesis, is here, in the twelfth chapter of the same Book, translated "Egypt," gratuitously, and most wrongly, as I contend; for in the first mention of the name it would have been impossible to say, and "Egypt begat Ludim, and Pathrusim, and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim);" and if so, on what pretence is the Hebrew word "Mitzraim" in the very next page of the Bible to be translated "Egypt," and thus made to apply to the country known by that name in Profane History?

In my opinion, this arbitrary and wholly unwarrantable assumption of the identity of the two countries, and the consequent erroneous translation of the Hebrew expression Mitzraim, has been more fraught with mischief, leading to the misunderstanding of the Scripture history, than any of the numerous errors which have unhappily to be laid at the door of the Septuagint Greek translators.

Independently of this, I would ask whether it is reasonable to imagine, or is it at all likely, that the Patriarch, in his journeys between Bethel and the distant western country "Egypt," would have proceeded through the "Negeb" or South

Country? A glance at the map will show that this must be answered in the negative.

If, however, we consider the land of Mitzraim, into which Abram went down from the "South" Country, to be in close proximity to that country and to the land of the Philistines, we may without difficulty understand not merely this portion of the Scripture history, but likewise those subsequent portions in which "Mitzraim" is wrongly translated "Egypt." For example, we read that Sarah's handmaid, Hagar the "Mitzrite," when ill-treated by her mistress, fled into the wilderness, to the well called "Beer-lahai-roi, between Kadesh and Bered;"[1] and that Abraham afterwards "journeyed from thence (Hebron) towards the south country (Negeb), and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar;"[2] that Hagar's son Ishmael, when driven with her from his father's house, "dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Mitzraim;"[3] and that he and his descendants "dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Mitzraim, as thou goest toward Assyria:"[4]—from all which texts, and from many others that might be cited,

[1] Gen. xvi. 14. [2] Gen. xx. 1. [3] Gen. xxi. 21.
[4] Gen. xxv. 18.

it certainly does appear that the country of Mitzraim therein named,—let its precise position and its boundaries be what they may,—can only have been in the immediate neighbourhood of the land of the Philistines and the South Country.

But many years ago the objection was raised by the late Dean Milman, when reviewing my work "Origines Biblicæ," and it has since been repeated by many others, that the Mitzraim of Scripture[1] was celebrated for its fertile corn-fields, which supplied not merely the native Mitzrites, but also their famished neighbours with food, and that this could only be Egypt watered by the river Nile; and under this view the seven years' famine in Mitzraim which Joseph prognosticated, and sagaciously provided against, is ascribed to the failure or insufficiency of the periodical inundations of that river. But this argument may be conclusively met by that which I adduced in answer to the criticism of Dr. Paulus of Jena,[2] who, next to Dean Milman, was my great opponent on this subject; namely, that natural causes operating during seven consecutive years at the sources of the Nile in

[1] See Quarterly Review for November 1834, vol. lii. pp. 510, 511.

[2] See Heidelberger Jahrbücher, January 1835. See also Beke's "Vertheidigung gegen Herrn Dr. Paulus," Leipzig, 1835.

Abyssinia, or elsewhere in the interior of Africa, could not be connected with the natural causes which produced a famine in the Land of Canaan, and in the "South Country" (Negeb) precisely during the same period. This objection was, however, attempted to be met by Dean Milman's suggestion in his "History of the Jews,"[1] that "a long and general drought, which would burn up the herbage of all the pastoral districts of Asia, might likewise diminish that accumulation of waters which, at its regular period, pours down the channel of the Nile. The waters are collected in the greatest part from the drainage of all the high levels in that region of Central Africa where the tropical rains, about the summer solstice, fall with incessant violence." But this suggestion is invalidated by the fact stated in my recently published pamphlet, "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 19,[2] that the tropical winds on which the rains in Central Africa are dependent do not extend to the pastoral districts of Asia; so that, even on the unphilosophical assumption of the absolute suspension of those winds throughout the tropics during seven consecutive years, acting not merely upon the Nile, but upon every other river

[1] Milman's History of the Jews, vol. i. 4th edit., 1866, p. 52.
[2] Published by Tinsley Brothers, 1873.

throughout the world having its sources within the tropics, a second natural cause, independent of such tropical winds, would still be requisite to produce the simultaneous drought within the *extra-tropical* regions of Asia to which Canaan and the Negeb belong.

Hence I suggested to my German reviewer, and I do so now to all who entertain the same opinion, that as he and they would doubtless be incredulous as to the miraculous coincidence of two such distinct natural causes, they might, on reflection, be inclined to admit that Mitzraim, like Canaan and the other districts where the famine raged during one and the same period, could not have been situate within the valley of the Nile; and that, consequently, *one single natural cause*, namely, an extraordinary continual drought in all those countries at the same time, with which the inundation of the Nile had nothing whatever to do, would suffice to bring about the result recorded in the Scripture history, the famine caused by that extensive drought having been specially and exclusively provided against in Mitzraim by the miraculous foresight and administrative talent of Joseph.

That the Land of the Philistines was a rich and fertile country, possessing vines and olives, and

producing corn, is shown by the story of Samson,[1] and the fact of its having furnished the Israelites with a resource in case of famine is established not only by what is narrated of the Shunammite widow, who having been forewarned by Elisha of the approaching seven years' famine in the land of Israel, "went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years,"[2] precisely as, eight centuries previously, her ancestor, the Patriarch Jacob, and his household, had, under similar circumstances, migrated into the conterminous corn-growing country of Mitzraim; but yet more by the apposite case of the Patriarch Isaac, of whom we read, that after his father's death, and whilst he "dwelt by the well Lahai-roi,"[3] "there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech, king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. And the Eternal appeared unto him, and said, *Go not down into Mitzraim;* dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land. . . . And Isaac dwelt in Gerar."[4] From which text it is manifest that even in the time of that patriarch the corn-growing country Philistia was a resource against famine, as it was in the time of the Prophet

[1] Judges xv. 5. [2] 2 Kings viii. 1, 2. [3] Gen. xxv. 11.
[4] Gen. xxvi. 1–6.

Elisha; and therefore the argument that Egypt, watered by the Nile, must of necessity have been the only country that escaped the famine in the next generation after Isaac, falls to the ground.

The further objection, that the country which I assert to be Mitzraim is at the present day a dreary waste, incapable of supplying its own wants, not to speak of those of the adjoining countries, is surely not valid. How many are the once rich, fertile, and populous regions in various parts of the earth, of which the condition has deteriorated quite as much as that of the Mitzraim of Scripture!

The Negeb, or "South Country," in particular, has, by the recent explorations of Professor Palmer and (the late) Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, been found to be covered with ruins of buildings and other signs of former prosperity and fertility,[1] which entirely belie the notions hitherto entertained of its utter inability to have ever maintained a large settled population, or, in fact, any inhabitants whatever beyond the scanty tribes that now wander over its barren surface. The following extracts from the "Desert of the Exodus" of the former of these two travellers shall be cited in proof of this assertion. On the road from Kalaâb en

[1] See Wilton's "Negeb," p. 61, London, 1863.

Nakhal to Hebron, in about 30° 20′ N. lat., Professor Palmer says:—"Descending into Wády Lussán itself, we found considerable signs of former cultivation; admirably constructed dams stretched across the valley, and on the higher slope were long low walls of very careful construction, consisting of two rows of stones beautifully arranged in a straight line, with smaller pebbles between. One of these was 180 yards long, then came a gap, and another wall of 240 yards, at the end of which it turned round in a sharp angle. The next was even larger, and here the object of the walls was at once apparent, as the enclosure was divided into large steps or terraces, to regulate the irrigation and distribute the water, the edge of each step being carefully built up with stones. They formed *Mezárí*, or cultivated patches of ground; and from the art displayed in their arrangement, belonged, evidently, to a *later* and more civilised people than those who now inhabit the country."[1]

Mr. Palmer identifies this spot Lussan with the ancient Roman station Lysa, which is mentioned in the *Peutinger* Tables as situated forty-eight Roman miles from *Eboda* or Abdeh.

He goes on to say that the principal reason for

[1] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, 1871, p. 347.

assuming Hebron, or more properly Wády el Khalíl, not to be the Eshkol of Numbers xiii. 23, "appears to be the circumstance that Hebron is the most southern point of Palestine where grapes are found, and that the district is still renowned for them. But (says he) it is a noteworthy fact that among the most striking characteristics of the Negeb are miles of hill-sides and valleys covered with the small stone-heaps formed by sweeping together in regular swathes the flints which strew the ground; along these grapes were trained, and they still retain the name of Teleilát el 'Anab, or 'grape mounds.' Towers similar to those which adorn the vineyards of Palestine are also of frequent occurrence throughout the country."[1] And at page 356 Mr. Palmer says, "The hill-sides are traversed in every direction by well-constructed paths, and traces are also visible in the valley of dams and other devices for irrigation, all of which bespeak a former state of fertility and industry." A few miles farther north the travellers came to the confluence of Wády el 'Ain, Wády Gaseimeh, and Wády es Serám; and the Professor adds (pp. 357, 358), "At the mouth of Wády el 'Ain the hill-sides are covered with paths and walls, and the bed of the

[1] *Mitzraim*, Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, 1871, p. 352.

wády has strongly-built dams extending across it, and is filled with mezárí or sowing-fields, and the surrounding hills are covered with innumerable stone remains. . . . As we proceed northward from this point, the marks of former cultivation become more and more apparent at every step. The wády-beds are embanked and laid out in fields, and dams are thrown across to break the force of, and utilise the water. The hill-sides are covered with paths and terraces, and everywhere there is some trace of ingenious industry." And next day he describes Wády *Berein* as "a broad valley, taking its rise in Jebel Magráh, and filled with vegetation; grass, asphodel, and *'oshej* grew in great profusion. Flowers sprang beneath our feet, immense herds of cattle were going to and fro between us to the wells, and large flocks of well-fed sheep and goats were pasturing upon the neighbouring hills. Numbers of donkeys, and some horses, the first we had seen in the country, were also feeding there. . . . The valley has been enclosed for purposes of cultivation, and banked-up terraces (called by the *Arabs* *'ugúm*), to stop the force of the *seils* and spread the waters over the cultivated ground, extend along the whole length of the wády-bed."[1]

[1] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, 1871, p. 361.

The following interesting description is also given by Professor Palmer of the mode in which water is obtained from wells sunk in the chalk country of Berein. He says:—"Opposite the *dowár* [or stone circle serving as enclosure for cattle] are two deep wells, built with very solid masonry, and surrounded with troughs for watering the flocks and herds; one of them is dry, the other still yields good water, and is about twenty-five feet deep. Besides the troughs, there are circular trenches, fenced round with stones, for the cattle to drink from. A man in the airy costume of our first parents *was always to be seen drawing water* for the camels, hundreds of which were crowding around to drink. When the camels had finished, the flocks came up; it was a curious sight to see the sheep and goats taking their turns, a few goats going up and making way for a few sheep, and so on until the whole flock had finished. A little farther on, is the *fiskîyeh*, a large reservoir, with an aqueduct leading down to it from the wells. The aqueduct is on the north-east side of the valley; it is well constructed and firmly cemented; the channel for the water is about eighteen inches wide and sixteen deep, and built on huge blocks of stone, which support it from below and give

the proper level; above it is a row of huge boulders, arranged so as to protect it from the falling *débris* and torrents. The *fiskîyeh*, or reservoir, is built of rather roughly dressed but squared stones, the courses of masonry, which are eight in number, running with great regularity vertically as well as horizontally. It has been originally plastered on the inside with hard cement, some of which still remains on the walls. Around the top of the walls is a path some eighteen inches wide, and above this are two more courses of masonry. The earth outside the tank has been piled up to within three feet of the top, and the remains of buttresses are still to be seen around it."[1] Writing of the people of Hanein (p. 365), he adds: "There exists an old tradition among them that, 'should a *seil* [flood or torrent] once come down Wády Hanein, there would be an end to all prosperity in the land.' . . . The tradition evidently dates from ancient times, and alludes to the admirable art with which the valley is dammed up, or rather laid out in terraces with strong embankments; these would make it simply impossible for any flood to rush through the valley, and would distribute the waters of a torrent equally over the sur-

[1] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, p. 362.

faces of the cultivated terraces, instead of allowing them to rush unimpeded down to the sea, as they would do in other valleys unprotected by such art."

All the valleys here mentioned are tributaries of the great *Nakhal Mitzráim* (or Naḥal), the Wády el Kebir ("Quadalquiver"), or great stream of Mitzraim, now known as the Wády el 'Arīsh.

Professor Palmer goes on to say, that in two hours and ten minutes from Berein they reached El 'Aujeh, where they encamped, a little above Wády Hanein, in about 30° 50′ north latitude, and being still about forty geographical miles south of Hebron, and twenty-five miles north of Beersheba. "Now all is desert, though the immense numbers of walls and terraces show how extensively cultivated the valley must once have been. Arab tradition, which calls Wády Hanein a 'valley of gardens,' is undoubtedly true for many of those large, flat, strongly-embanked terraces must have been once planted with fruit-trees, and others have been laid out in kitchen-gardens: this would still leave many miles for the cultivation of grain." [1]

My own experience too, in my passage across the desert, between the heads of the Gulfs of Akaba and Suez, has convinced me that the destruction of

[1] Palmer's Desert of the Exodus, p. 366.

the trees which once were planted there, and the consequent aridity of the country has reduced it to the miserable condition in which it now is.

The time was when the Nakhal Mitzraim, the Brook of Mitzraim,[1]—not the "River of Egypt," as it is so erroneously translated, and now known as the Wády el 'Arīsh,—was, as were once the Paglione of Nice, the Po, the Arno, the Tiber, the Sebeto, and most of the Italian rivers, a full perennial stream, instead of being, as it now is, a dry river-bed, except at the momentary period when it is an impetuous torrent carrying away every atom of good productive soil, and overwhelming and destroying everything it meets with in its headlong course.

In thus speaking of the Wády el 'Arīsh, or Nakhal Mitzraim, I wish it to be understood that this *wády*, or one of its branches, and not the Nile of Egypt, is the *Yeór* of the Biblical Mitzraim, on the brink of which the infant Moses was exposed,[2] and the water of which was turned into blood[3] by the deliverer of the Israelites.

That the Hebrew expression "Yeór" cannot mean the Nile may be proved by twofold arguments. In the first place, it is the Euphrates that is styled

[1] In "Origines Biblicæ," p. 286, I conjectured this to have been the Wády Ghazza, the much smaller wády near Gaza.

[2] Exod. ii. 3. [3] Exod. vii. 19.

in the Pentateuch "the great river" (κατ' ἐξοχην), which it would not have been had the much larger river, the Nile of Egypt, been known to the Israelites; and secondly, we find it stated in the account of the first of the "plagues of Mitzraim" that "the Eternal spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Mitzraim, upon their streams (*naharothám*), upon their river (*yeorehém*), and upon their ponds (*agmehém*), and upon all their pools (*mikveh memehém*) of water, that they may become blood;"[1] when, if the words "neharóth," "yeorím," "agammím," and "mikveh mayim," be considered (which it would seem they ought to be) as placed in the order of their relative importance, it would result that the "yeór" must be looked upon as being of an inferior character to the "nahár;" and seeing that "nahár" is from its derivation a *stream* or natural river of flowing water—from *nahár*, "to flow"—it is not unlikely that "yeór" may, in contradiction to "nahár," mean an artificial watercourse, a *canal*, as apparently it does in Job xxviii. 10. Or it may mean a *fountain*, or perhaps even a wády or "winter-brook." At all events, as there were several

[1] Exod. vii. 19.

yeórs (yeorím) in Mitzraim and elsewhere, and the expression *yeór* is subordinate to *nahar*,—the "bahr" of the Arabs, the "yeór" of Exodus, cannot under any circumstances be their Bahr en Nil —the river Nile, which, in the estimation of the natives of Egypt, both ancient and modern, is without its equal in the whole world.

On an impartial consideration of the whole subject, it appears to be certain that the country in which the *yeór* of Mitzraim[1] was situated was altogether beyond the reach of the Nilotic inundations, not merely on account of its total unfitness for the permanent pasture of the flocks and herds of the Israelites, had it been subject to be periodically overflowed, but also from the circumstance that had it been exposed to these inundations, the description given of it in the Pentateuch, and the marked distinction made between Mitzraim and the Land of Canaan, would be totally inapplicable. The words are, "For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Mitzraim, from whence ye came out, *where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:* but the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Eternal thy God careth for;"[2]—

[1] See Origines Biblicæ, pp. 288, 289. [2] Deut. xi. 10-12.

from which declaration it is manifest that the grand distinction between the Promised Land and the country of Mitzraim, as regarded the productions of Nature, was, that in the former country vegetation was produced by natural means, that is to say, by "the rain from heaven," whereas in the latter it was principally by artificial irrigation,—by the 'watering with the foot'—that the abundant harvests were produced which caused Mitzraim to be a place of refuge for the pastoral people of the regions to the north-east, in the time of scarcity to which they were so often subject from a deficiency of water in their own country.

The discussion of the subject of the *Yam Suf*, or Red Sea, which I consider to be the Sea of Edom, or Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez,[1] had better be deferred till I come to treat of my voyage up that sea in the steamer "Erin," so kindly placed at my disposal for that purpose by his Highness the Khédive of Egypt.

The way being otherwise thus cleared, we may proceed to the consideration of the true position of Mount Sinai.

From what has been said in the preceding

[1] See Origines Biblicæ, pp. 176–182; also Dr. Beke's "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 8, published 1873.

chapter, it is manifest that there is no tradition respecting the position of Mount Sinai on which the slightest dependence can be placed, unless indeed the statements of the Apostle Paul and the historian Josephus, already cited, be accepted as indications of the survival to their days of the knowledge that that mountain was situated within the Arabian country of Midian on the east side of the valley of the Jordan, and its continuation to the Gulf of Akaba, known as the Ghor and Wády Arabah; and that the Biblical Land of Midian was part of the "East Country" inhabited by the descendants of the Patriarch Abraham by Keturah [1]—that is to say, the country lying to the east of Jordan—is a truism that scarcely stands in need of proof. The position of Midian is thus stated in "Origines Biblicæ:" [2]—"It is known that the district immediately to the eastward of the Dead Sea and of the Jordan was possessed by the Moabites and Ammonites, the descendants of Lot; and as the situation of the country of the Keturites was also east of Jordan, these latter people, of whom the Midianites were a principal branch, must—so far as they spread themselves southward,—necessarily have had their territory at the front, or to the east

[1] Gen. xxv. 1–5. [2] Origines Biblicæ, p. 190.

of the country of the children of Moab and Ammon. In thus extending themselves over the great Syrian Desert, as far, probably, as 'the great river, the river Euphrates,' the possessions of these descendants of Abraham by Keturah would have approached those of the children of Ishmael, who 'dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Mitzraim, as thou goest toward Assyria;'[1] and as these two people were of common origin, we can have no difficulty in conceiving that the Midianites may have become so intermixed and even amalgamated with the Ishmaelites, as to have occasioned the two races frequently to be considered as one people. That such was actually the case is, indeed, evident from the fact, that the names of these two people, the Ishmaelites and the Midianites, are in two instances used in Scripture as convertible terms; the one instance being where the 'company of Ishmeelites,' to whom Joseph was sold by his brethren, are in the same passage also described as 'Midianites,' 'merchant-men;'[2] and the other occurring where the Midianites, under Zebah and Zalmunna, who were conquered by Gideon, are mentioned as wearing 'golden ear-rings, because they were Ishmaelites,'[3] that is to say, Midianites."

[1] Gen. xxv. 18. [2] Gen. xxxvii. 25–28. [3] Judges viii. 12–24.

[In support of this hypothesis, I would venture to draw attention to our friend, Captain Richard Burton's recent discoveries in Midian. I think I may evidence, as a remarkable confirmation of Dr. Beke's conclusion, the *fact* that Captain Burton has found gold there. Following in the footsteps of my lamented husband, he made an expedition at the commencement of last year (1877) to the Land of Midian, on the east side of the Gulf of Akaba (which is under the viceregal rule of the Khédive of Egypt); that he landed at Moilah, on the east coast of the Arabian Gulf (erroneously called "Red Sea"), at the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba, or "Red Sea;" that thence he proceeded to Aiuunah, a place a little farther north—of which a description is given by Dr. Beke in chapter vii.; and here commenced those explorations which resulted in the following announcement in the "Times" of the 14th May 1877:—"From Makna, *i.e.*, Midian (Mugna of the maps), the capital of the Land of Midian,[1] up to Akaba, at the head of the gulf, Captain Burton reports the country as auriferous, and he believes the district southwards as far as Gebel Hassani—a mountain well known to geographers—to possess the same character. He even goes so far as to say

[1] For illustration of Midian, see chapter vii.

he has brought back to life an ancient California." It is further reported by Captain Burton that the country abounds in curious wádies; that the coast is divided from the interior by a range of granite and porphyry mountains running about parallel with the sea; but water has worn its way as usual, and these gorges, each with its mountain torrent, occur at frequent intervals. They are barren rocky places, with no possibility of much culture, *and yet they all bear signs of abundant population in times gone by.* Large towns, built *not* of mud, as Arab towns often are, but of solid masonry, such as the Romans always used; roads cut in the rock, aqueducts five miles long, remains of massive fortresses, artificial lakes—all signs of wealth. That the rocks are full of mineral wealth. Gold and silver he found in great quantities—the quartz and chlorites occurring with gold in them just as they are found in the gold districts of South America; evidences of turquoise mines; and abundance of copper, antimony, and, indeed, of all the metals mentioned in the Books of Numbers and in Judges. Thus affording a most remarkable confirmation of the truth of the Holy Record, that, "among the spoils brought from the Land of Midian (Numb. xxxi. 22, 50–54) were gold, silver, brass, tin, iron, lead, and jewels;" and in

another expedition (Judges viii. 24–27) that the quantity of gold taken was so great that "Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city." It is a curious fact (says a correspondent of the "Times," 12th November 1877) that these mines were known to the ancients so long ago as the time of Ramses III., whose cartouche is inscribed on the Needle which has just been brought to England. In the Harris Papyrus, in the British Museum, the following passage occurs (and is given from the translation of the hieroglyphics):—"I, Ramses, have sent my commissioners to the land Akaba, to the great mines of coppers and others there, and their ships were loaded with coppers and others (the men) marching on their asses. Nobody had heard since the olden kings that one had found these mines. The cargoes were copper. The cargoes were by myriads; for their ships which went from there to Egypt arrived happily. Discharge was made according to order under the pavilion of brick of the Kings of Thebes of the copper, numerous as frogs in the marsh, in quality equal to gold of the third degree, admired by the world as a marvellous thing."

From what has been so far related, it may without doubt be concluded that the Midian, which Dr. Beke discovered in 1874 on the east side of the

Gulf of Akaba, is the Midian of Moses's father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, Dr. Beke having identified "Moses's Place of Prayer" at Midian (Mugna of the maps) with the "Encampment by the Red Sea of the Israelites," and Marghara Sho'eib, or "Jethro's Cave" (distant half a day's journey), also with the "Elim" of the Exodus.

Apart then from the interest generally felt in Captain Burton's explorations now being made in search of gold, those who are interested in the far more momentous Biblical subject, will look, as I do, with the deepest anxiety for the particulars which this learned and experienced traveller can so ably, and indeed better than any one else, furnish us with, of this hitherto little known and unexplored country.[1]—Ed.]

The convertibility of the two terms "Midianites" and "Ishmaelites" is similar to that at the present day of Britons and Englishmen,—Gauls and Frenchmen. The Ishmaelites, however, would appear to have stretched themselves out farther to the south and east than the Midianites, namely, towards Havilah, which in Genesis x. 28, 29, is joined with Sheba and Ophir, these three countries having been all noted for the gold which they

[1] See Capt. Burton's forthcoming work, "The Gold Mines of Midian."

supplied; and hence it was that the Ishmaelites obtained the "golden earrings" which they were accustomed to wear.[1]

Some curious information bearing immediately on this subject was communicated by the Rev. George Williams to the Section of Geography and Ethnology, at the Cambridge Meeting of the British Association, on October 7, 1862, and recorded by me in "A Few Words with Bishop Colenso;"[2] on the subject of the Exodus of the Israelites and the position of Mount Sinai, published shortly afterwards. It was to the effect, that there is a tribe of Arabs inhabiting a portion of the Arabian Desert, east of the Ghor—that is to say, in the direction of the ancient land of Midian—who are described as being much superior to the ordinary Bedouins, and in several respects very different from them.[3] They profess the Israelitish religion, and declare themselves to be Ishmaelites descended from the Rechabites, "the children of the Kenite, Moses's father-in-law,"[4] affirming that they dwelt in the original country of their forefathers. A

[1] The position of Ophir is discussed in "Origines Biblicæ," pp. 112–116, and in "The Sources of the Nile," pp. 60–65.

[2] Published by Williams & Norgate, 1862, p. 11.

[3] Did not Captain Burton meet with them on his journey to Mecca?

[4] Judges i. 16, iv. 11.

peculiarity of this relation, which was at that time, as it is now, my motive for directing attention to it, is, that these Bedouins are said to claim to be both Ishmaelites and Rechabites (that is, "Midianites"), the two descents being adopted by them apparently without any distinction; in which fact we have a pertinent illustration of the two texts of Scripture adverted to above.

The situation of the country of the Midianites being thus approximatively determined, even if not absolutely defined, if we now turn to the second chapter of Exodus, we there read that, "Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian,"[1] that is to say, in this "East Country," the only country that ever rightly bore that name. The placing of the Midian into which Moses fled within the mountainous region on the *west* side of the Gulf of Akaba, where it is actually to the south of the Négeb, or "South Country,"[2] and thus making it appear that there were at one and the same time two countries of one and the same name on the two opposite sides of the Gulf of Akaba, or Red Sea, is one of the absurdities which have been caused by the exigencies of the Egyptian tradition, which had placed Mount

[1] Exod. ii. 15. [2] Gen. xx. 1.

Sinai within the Peninsula on the west side of that Gulf.

We further read that whilst dwelling in this land of Midian in the "East Country," "Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the back side of the desert,"[1]—as the expression is usually rendered; but, as it should be translated in its proper geographical sense,[2] "to the *west* of the desert," —and he there "came to the Mount of God, Horeb," which mountain, consequently, as regards the direction from the dwelling of Jethro in Midian, whence Moses had led the sheep, would be on that side of the desert which is nearest to Mitzraim, or between his country and Midian.

After the command given to Moses to return to Mitzraim, he first "went and returned to Jethro, his father-in-law,"[3] in Midian, to acquaint him with his intended departure, and then he "took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Mitzraim."[4] And we further read that the Eternal, agreeably to the

[1] Exod. iii. 1.

[2] The Hebrews express "east," "west," "north," and "south," by "before," "behind," "left," and "right" according to their bearing from the position of a man whose face is turned towards the rising sun.

[3] Exod. iv. 18.

[4] Exod. iv. 20.

word which He spake to Moses at Horeb, said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the Mount of God."[1] The fact here undeniably established is that Moses, on his road from Midian into Mitzraim, encountered Aaron, who was coming out of the latter country to meet him, and that the place where the brothers met was "the Mount of God," the identical place "to the west side of the desert," where the Eternal had previously appeared to Moses "in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush."[2]

In the absence of all reasons to the contrary, we are justified, therefore, in assuming—if indeed we are not bound to conclude—that the road which was taken by Moses on his return to Mitzraim, and on which he was thus met by Aaron, was the usual and direct road between the two countries; for on no other road would they have had a chance of encountering one another without a special direction from the Almighty as to the course they were each to take; and that no such direction was given is to be inferred from the words of God unto Moses, having been, simply, "*Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? . . . Behold, he cometh forth to meet thee."[3] Consequently it is in the direction

[1] Exod. iv. 27. [2] Exod. iii. 2. [3] Exod. iv. 14.

of this highroad between Mitzraim and Midian that we have to look for the precise position of "the Mount of God."

It may be well here to touch briefly on the question as to whether "Horeb, the Mount of God," is the same as "Mount Sinai" on which the Law was delivered—not that any real difficulty on this point presents itself to my own mind, but because of the idea entertained by many persons that the two must be different, inasmuch as the monkish tradition, which makes Jebel Musa to be Sinai, regards as Horeb the rock projecting into the plain of Rahab, known as Ras Sufsâfeh. But the utter worthlessness of the tradition having been shown, any argument based on that tradition alone cannot but be equally valueless. As far as the Scripture narrative is concerned, Sinai and Horeb appear to be synonymous and interchangeable designations of the same Holy Place. In the words of Jerome, "Mihi autem videtur quod duplice nomine mons nunc Sina, nunc Choreb vocetur."[1]

The country to the east of the meridian of the Jordan and of the Gulf of Akaba, in which Mount Sinai is thus shown to be situated, is so little known, that any attempt to fix with precision the position

[1] De Situ et Nominibus, 191.

of the spot where the Almighty spake with His servant Moses in the sight of the Children of Israel, must, without precise local information, be hardly better than mere speculation.

For forty years past, since I published "Origines Biblicæ," I have from time to time speculated on the subject in various publications, of which the principal ones are noted at foot; the last of them, namely, the pamphlet "Mount Sinai a Volcano,"[1] having been the immediate cause of the journey which I undertook towards the close of last year (1873), with a view to verify the conclusions at which I had arrived in that pamphlet. What success has attended my attempt will be narrated in chapters vii. and viii.

[1] "Mount Sinai a Volcano," published by Tinsley Brothers, 1873. "A Few Words with Bishop Colenso," published by Williams & Norgate, 1862. "On the Localities of Horeb, Mount Sinai, and Midian," published in the "British Magazine," vol. vii., June 1835. "On the Wanderings of the Israelites in the Desert," "Asiatic Journal," May 1838. "On the Passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites," "Asiatic Journal," vol. xxvi., May 1838. "The Idol in Horeb," Tinsley Brothers, 1871. Mrs. Beke's "Jacob's Flight," Longmans & Co., 1865, &c.

CHAPTER III.*

THE DYNASTIES OF MANETHO, AND ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE SHEPHERD KINGS, OR MITZRITES.

It is said that about the middle of the third century before the commencement of the Christian era, Manetho, the High Priest of the Temple of Isis at Sebennytris, in Lower Egypt, was commanded by Ptolemy Philadelphus, the second sovereign of the Greek Dynasty of the Lagidæ, to compose in the Greek language a history of his native country from the sacred records.

The Egyptian scribe is represented as being versed in Greek not less than in Egyptian lore, which might well be the case, seeing the intercourse that had existed between Greece and Egypt during the four centuries which had elapsed since the accession of Psammitichus in 665 B.C. As instances of this, and also to serve as landmarks of the interchange of ideas that must necessarily have taken place between the two nations during that long interval, it may be mentioned that Solon visited Egypt in

* Written by the late Dr. Beke, June 12, 1874.

558 B.C., Thales in 548 B.C., Hecatæus in 520–475 B.C., Pythagoras in 498, and Herodotus in 413 B.C.

It has long been the habit to attribute to the Egyptians an amount of wisdom far exceeding that of any other nations of antiquity, in support of which notion is also the statement in 1 Kings iv. 30, that "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Mitzraim;" but this, in the first place, is founded on the assumption that "Mitzraim" means "Egypt," which I deny; and secondly, this wisdom of one man is placed in juxtaposition with the "wisdom of the children of the east country," and with that of the learned men named in the following verse.[1] "For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about;" so that in reality it has no specific application. That an inquisitive traveller like Herodotus should call the Egyptians "by far the best-instructed people with whom he had become acquainted, since they, of all men, store up most for recollection,"[2] is just such a remark as an European traveller of the present day might make with respect to the Hindoos or Chinese.

[1] 1 Kings iv. 31. [2] Herodotus, lib. ii. sect. 77.

And on the other hand, we may well imagine a native of the Celestial Empire to address an "outside barbarian" in words similar to those in which, as Plato tells us, the priests of Sais apostrophised one of the seven sages of Greece: "O Solon, Solon! you Greeks are but children; in Greece there does not exist an old man." I may even appeal to my own experience in Abyssinia, where the longer I resided, and the more I became acquainted with the language, and the manners, and customs of the people, the more learned and intelligent I was considered to be; so that had I remained long enough among those semi-barbarians, I might eventually have expected to be complimented on my having become as wise as themselves.

And yet, notwithstanding this self-conceit, the sure sign of real ignorance, we may rest assured that, like as the Europeans in India, China, and Abyssinia, the Greeks imported into Egypt far more real knowledge than they acquired from the natives of that country.

Without raising any question as to the authenticity of the story of Manetho, which is, however, similar to the apocryphal tale of the origin of the Greek version of the Old Testament, said to have been in like manner made by order of Ptolemy

Philadelphus, by seventy-two learned Jews of Alexandria, it has to be remarked that lists of the Sovereigns of Egypt must have existed long before the time of the Ptolemies. Herodotus, who visited that country more than a century and a half before the date attributed to Manetho, relates that:—"When the part cut off had been made firm land by this Menes, who was *first king*, he in the first place built on it the city that is now called Memphis. . . . In the next place, *they relate* that he built in it the Temple of Vulcan. . . . After this the priests enumerated from a book the names of three hundred and thirty other kings. In so many generations of men, there were eighteen Ethiopians and one native queen, the rest were Egyptians."[1] And he goes on to say:[2] "Thus much of the account the Egyptians and the priests related, showing that from the first king to this priest of Vulcan who last reigned, were three hundred forty and one generations of men; and during these generations, there were the same number of chief priests and kings. Now, three hundred generations are equal to ten thousand years, for three generations of men are one hundred years: and the forty-one remaining generations that were over the

[1] Cary's Translation of Herodotus, Euterpe, 99, 100.
[2] Ibid., 142, 143.

three hundred, make one thousand three hundred and forty years . . . In former time, the priests of Jupiter did to Hecatæus the historian, when he was tracing his own genealogy, and connecting his family with a god in the sixteenth degree, the same as they did to me, though I did not trace my genealogy. Conducting me into the interior of an edifice that was spacious, and showing me wooden colossuses to the number I have mentioned, they reckoned them up; for every high priest places an image of himself there during his lifetime; the priests, therefore, reckoning them and showing them to me, pointed out that each was the son of his own father; going through them all, from the image of him that died last, until they had pointed them all out."

Though Josephus tells us that Manetho "finds great fault with Herodotus for his ignorance and false relations of Egyptian affairs,"[1] which, with the faith I have in the truthfulness of the Halicarnassian traveller, and the little reliance I have on the statements of the "veracious" Jewish historian, and the Egyptian annalist, I am inclined to accept as a testimonial in favour of Herodotus.

This alleged work of Manetho has not come down to our days: it did not even exist in the time of the Jewish historian Josephus, but is conjectured

[1] Contra Apion, lib. i. c. 14.

to have perished when the great Alexandrian Library, founded by the same Ptolemy, was destroyed by fire, "in the forty-seventh year before Christ." But fragments of it have been preserved by Josephus and others, and lists of the Sovereigns of Egypt from the time of Menes, said to be copied from Manetho, and probably obtained from other sources, likewise are found in the writings of subsequent authors, of whom the most famous are Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, in the fourth century of our era, and the Byzantine monk, Georgius Syncellus, who lived five centuries later, and from whose work we possess the fullest list of the various dynasties of the sovereigns of Egypt according to Manetho, which he professes to have taken from the works of Julius Apecarius, Bishop of Emmæus or Nicopolis, in Judæa, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, A.D. 250, or nearly five centuries after Manetho himself.

Whatever questions may have existed formerly as to the genuineness of these Manetho dynasties, or as to whether some of them at least ought not to be considered as contemporaneous, like those of the kings of our Saxon Heptarchy, these Manethonic dynasties are at the present day accepted by most Egyptologists as authentic lists of one consecutive series of Sovereigns, who governed that coun-

try from the remotest period of history; the date of the accession of the earliest king, Menes, being placed by Bunsen in 3059 B.C., by Lepsius in 3893 B.C., and by Mariette in 5005 B.C.; and the authenticity of these lists, notwithstanding these manifest discrepancies respecting their commencement, is affirmed to be established by the testimony of the hieroglyphical inscriptions on the monumental remains of Egypt, as deciphered according to the system of Champollion.

Nevertheless, it is a singular fact, which does not appear to have received the attention that it so justly deserves, that those hieroglyphical inscriptions, as hitherto interpreted, are far from agreeing with, and so confirming, the Manethonic lists. This is what Mariette Bey himself says on the subject in his valuable little work, "Aperçu de l'Histoire d'Egypte,"[1] published in 1872: from which I think it right to make the following extract. Speaking of the principal monuments possessing a general historic interest, that learned Egyptologist candidly states that they are as follows:—

"The first is a papyrus preserved in the Turin Museum, to which it was sold by M. Drovetti, Consul-General for France. Were this papyrus in-

[1] Alexandria, Mourès & Co., 3d edit., 1872, p. 126.

tact, Egyptology would not possess a more precious monument; for it contains a list of all the mythical and historical personages who have reigned over Egypt from the fabulous ages down to a period which we cannot estimate because we do not possess the latter portion of the papyrus. This list, which was composed during the reign of Ramses II., one of the best epochs of Egyptian history, has all the signs of an official document; and it would be of the greatest assistance to us, inasmuch as each royal name is followed by the length of his reign, and at the end of each dynasty is inserted the total number of years during which that dynasty had governed the affairs of Egypt. Unfortunately the carelessness of the fellahs who discovered the '*Royal Papyrus of Turin*,' and the still greater carelessness of those who forwarded it to Europe, have dealt it the most fatal blow, and this inestimable treasure, from its having thus passed through unskilful hands, now only exists in minute fragments (164 in number), which for the most part it is impossible to put together. Incomparable in value as it would be were it entire, the Turin papyrus has thus lost all credit, and it is seldom referred to in works treating of Egyptology.

"2. Another precious monument was removed

from the Temple of Karnak by M. Prisse and presented to the Imperial Library of Paris. This monument consists of a small chamber, on the walls of which is represented Thūtmis III. making offerings before the images of sixty-one of his predecessors; whence it is called the 'Hall of the Ancestors' (Salle des Ancêtres). But here we have not to do with a regular uninterrupted series; the monarch has made *a choice* from among his predecessors, and to them alone he pays homage. But what is the reason for this choice? At first sight, then, the Hall of the Ancestors can only be regarded as an extract from the royal lists of Egypt. The person who has composed this list, from motives which we cannot fathom, has taken here and there some names of kings, sometimes accepting an entire dynasty, at other times altogether passing over long periods. It has further to be remarked that the artist to whom was confided the embellishment of the chamber has executed his work from an artistic point of view, without caring to place his figures in strictly chronological order. And in the last place, it must be mentioned that some lamentable mutilations—twelve names of kings are wanting—have partially deprived the Paris list of its importance. Hence it results that

the Hall of the Ancestors does not afford to science all the assistance we had seemingly a right to expect from it. It has however rendered us the service of determining more precisely than any other list the names borne by the kings of the thirteenth dynasty.

"3. The Monument called the Table of Abydos has to be added to the series we are now enumerating. As is indicated by its name, this monument comes from Abydos, whence it was taken by M. Mimaut, Consul-General of France, and it is now among the treasures preserved in the British Museum.

"In the whole archæology of Egypt there is perhaps no monument more celebrated and yet so little deserving its reputation. It is here, Ramses II. who is paying homage to his ancestors. Originally the royal *cartouches* (not including those of the dedicator himself which are repeated twenty-eight times), were fifty in number, of which there only remain thirty, more or less complete. Then, the Table of Abydos, like the Hall of the Ancestors, offers us a list which is the result of a choice inspired by motives unknown to us. There is also another cause which detracts from the scientific value which the Table of Abydos might otherwise possess: we have not its commencement. After the eight

eenth dynasty, this list passes without transition to the twelfth; but to what dynasty are we to attach the fourteen unknown cartouches which the monument places above the twelfth? Do they belong to the most ancient royal families, or are they to be used for filling up a portion of the monumental break (*vide*) which we find between the sixth and the eleventh? Consequently the Table of Abydos is not one of those authorities, such as the Papyrus of Turin might have been, which serve to lay a solid foundation-stone for science. No doubt when Egyptology was in its infancy it aided Champollion in his classification of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty. Later on it served Lepsius as a *repère* to place the Amenemhas and Ousertasens in their respective orders, and thus to identify these Monarchs of Manetho's twelfth dynasty. But that is all, and it is not likely that the Table of Abydos will ever reveal to us any more of those secrets which so powerfully aid our studies." And in a footnote the learned author adds: "There exist at Abydos two temples raised to the local divinity, the first by Seti, and the other by Ramses. One and the same series of kings, twice repeated without any change, adorned these two temples. The one is the 'Table of Abydos' of which I have just

spoken : the other has recently been discovered by ourselves. This second table, which is the prototype of the one in London, although in excellent preservation, adds very little to our knowledge. It makes known to us some new names of kings; it confirms the dynastic classification of some others; but it is still far from giving us a regular and consecutive series of all the Kings who have reigned over Egypt from Menes down to Seti."

"4. The most complete and most interesting monument of this kind that we possess is the one resulting from our excavations at Saqqarah which now forms part of the Boulak Collection. This has not a royal origin as the others have. It was discovered in the tomb of an Egyptian priest, named *Tūnar-i*, who lived in the time of Ramses II. It was a point of Egyptian belief that one of the privileges reserved for the dead who had merited eternal life was to be admitted to the society of the kings. Tūnar-i is here represented as entering into the august assembly, in which fifty-eight kings are present. But all the doubts raised by the Table of Abydos are revived here. Why these fifty-eight kings more than any others? As long as this problem remains unsolved, the Table of Saqqarah can only possess a relative value for science. It

must, however, be said that the list in the Boulak Museum has incontestable advantages over all the others. In the first place we know its commencement, and thus we possess a fixed *jalon* at the head of the list: secondly, between the *jalon* and the termination of the series, may be added here and there, by means of cartouches previously known and classified, certain other intermediate *jalons*, which give to the grand outlines of the whole a precision unknown to the other documents. By this means it is that, beyond the eighteenth, the twelfth, and the eleventh dynasties, we reach the six earliest dynasties, which, by an unlooked-for good fortune, we find on this Table almost as complete as they are in Manetho. The Table of Saqqarah is therefore, at all events, an exceptional monument, to which we shall presently direct all our attention."

"Such," says the learned Egyptologist, "are the most celebrated Egyptian monuments which possess a general interest for history;" and these monuments, as it is manifest from his candid avowal, do *not* agree with the Manethonic dynastic lists. Why then are we to accept those chronicles of the Ptolemaic era, which have come down to us through such doubtful channels, in preference to

the contemporaneous records of a "Ramses II.," a "Thūtmis III.," and of a "Tūnar-i living under Ramses II." ?

M. Mariette adduces the lists on these monuments as proofs of the truth of the Manethonic lists. "The Table of Saqqarah," says he, "fortunately comes to lend its support to the Egyptian annalist. That table being only able to give us *a choice* of sovereigns, we must not expect to find in it all the names that Manetho enumerates." Ought it not rather to be said that the simple fact of our not finding in it all the names that Manetho enumerates, affords a convincing proof that the Manethonic dynastic lists, whatever may be their real value, are no true chronological lists of the Sovereigns of Egypt ?

For myself, I am assuredly disposed to give far more credence to the monuments of those early periods themselves than to the statements of the scribe of Sebennytris, whose writings, penned one thousand years after the assumed date of those monuments, have themselves only been handed down to us by a Byzantine monk who lived another thousand years after Manetho himself.

My object in thus adverting to the general subject of the history of Ancient Egypt, in which I

should not otherwise have any special interest, is to show how little dependence is to be placed on the views generally entertained respecting the absolute character of that history and its chronology as opposed to those of the Hebrew Scriptures, and that the date of 5005 B.C., of 3893 B.C., or even of 3059 B.C., for the commencement of the reign of Menes, the founder of the Egyptian Monarchy, ought by no means to be taken as irrevocably established.

The monuments of the country themselves must always perform a highly important part in the reconstruction of its history. Those of the so-called Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, discovered by M. Mariette, have already thrown an intense light on that portion of it which is contemporaneous with the history of the Hebrew Pentateuch. The *opinion advanced by me in my "Origines Biblicæ" forty years ago, that the Mitzraim of Scripture is not the Egypt of Profane History, is now shown to be substantially true;* namely, that the Mitzrites —of whose Sovereign the Patriarch Joseph was the Minister, under whom the Israelites were in bondage, and from whose hands they were liberated by their inspired leader and legislator Moses—were not Egyptians, but a people of foreign extraction, of a type quite different from the Egyptians both

ancient and modern, who invaded Egypt from the East, and held rule over its inhabitants during many centuries, and whose descendants exist at the present day in the extreme north-eastern portion of Lower Egypt, at Menzaleh and San—supposed to represent the ancient Tanis and the Zoan of Scripture.

As is stated in a pamphlet "A Few Words with Bishop Colenso on the Subject of the Exodus of the Israelites and the Position of Mount Sinai," published towards the close of 1862, when I was in Egypt in the beginning of that year (January 27th), my attention was directed to the subject of these people by Dr. Schnepp, Secretary of the Egyptian Institute at Alexandria, who also referred me to an article by M. Mariette in the "Revue Archéologique" for February 1861, giving an account of them, and describing some ancient statues of the same race dug up by him in that locality.[1]

I was then on my way back from Harran with

[1] See "A Few Words with Bishop Colenso," p. 13.

These statues are figured in the "Revue Archéologique." A brief notice of them is given in the "Parthenon" of June 28, 1862. Some of the physical distinctions between the Mitzrites and the Egyptians were indicated by me in a paper "On the Complexion of the Ancient Egyptians," published in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature," vol. iii. pp. 143–152, and reprinted in the "Philosophical Magazine," vol. xi. (1837), pp. 344–353.

my wife, having for many years previously, as is related in my pamphlet "Mount Sinai a Volcano," paid no attention whatever to the object of the studies of my youth. But the instant Dr. Schnepp brought these interesting facts to my knowledge, I at once perceived and explained to him that these stranger people must be the representatives of the ancient *Mitzrites*, of whose existence as a nation distinct from the Egyptians, into whom they subsequently merged, and so became lost as a separate people, a memorial, independently of the Hebrew Scriptures, has been preserved in the legendary history of the *Hyksos* or Shepherd Kings.

The account given by Herodotus of the cruelty of the builders of the Pyramids of Ghizah, Cheops, and Chephren has been imagined to allude to these Hyksos. He says, "Thus the affliction of Egypt endured for the space of one hundred and six years, during the whole of which time the temples were shut up and never opened. The Egyptians so detest the memory of these kings that they do not much like even to mention their names. Hence they commonly call the Pyramids after Philition, a shepherd who at that time fed his flocks about the place."[1]

In a note on this passage my old friend, Sir

[1] Herodotus, lib. ii. c. 128, Rawlinson's Trans.

Gardner Wilkinson,[1] remarks, that "this can have no connection with the invasion or the memory of the Shepherd Kings, at least as founders of the Pyramids, which some have conjectured; for these monuments were raised long before the rule of the Shepherd Kings in Egypt;" and Professor Rawlinson goes on to say,[2] "In the mind of the Egyptians two periods of oppression may have gradually come to be confounded, and they may have ascribed to the tyranny of the Shepherd Kings what in reality belonged to a far earlier time of misrule. It should not be forgotten that the Shepherds, whether Philistines, Hittites, or other Scyths, would at any rate . . . be regarded by the Egyptians as Philistines. Hence, perhaps, the name of Pelusium (Philistine-town), applied to the last city which *they* held in Egypt."

The builders of the Pyramids are considered to have been monarchs of Manetho's fourth native dynasty. But, as Professor Owen stated at the anniversary dinner of the Royal Geographical Society, on May 24, 1869, "Ethnologically we learn from sculptures and figures of the second, third, and fourth dynasties, exhumed by Mariette,

[1] This learned Egyptologist's decease has occurred since the above was written.

[2] Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. ii. p. 205 note.

that the founders of such governed society in the fertile soil of Egypt were certainly not African, not Ethiopian, but Asiatic, with indications of a more northern origin than the Assyrian or the Hindoo;"[1] that is to say, the builders of the Pyramids were not native Egyptians, but an exotic race, of "a more northern origin than the Assyrian or Hindoo," who invaded and occupied Lower Egypt long before the time of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings.

But in a paper on the Ethnology of Egypt, read at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute on June the 9th last,[2] by the same scholar since his return from Egypt, it was asserted that the study of the portrait sculptures discovered by Mariette Bey "led to the conclusion that three distinct types were indicated: first, the Primal Egyptian type, with no trace either of Negro or Arab; secondly, the type of the conquering Shepherd Kings or Syro-Arabians, which is exemplified in the Abyssinian sculptures; thirdly, the Nubian Egyptian." This statement I cannot reconcile with the same scholar's exposition made five years previously, unless it be that the "Primal Egyptians" were an "Asiatic" people, with indications of a more northern origin

[1] See Beke's "Idol in Horeb," p. 41.

[2] Proceedings of the Anthropological Society, June 9, 1874.

than the "Assyrian or the Hindoo." Doubtless when the paper itself is printed *in extenso* the matter will be rendered more intelligible than it is at present.

Reverting to the history of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, it has to be remarked that these invaders of Egypt were by Josephus imagined to be the children of Israel,[1] and the history of their expulsion from Egypt to be only another version of that of the Exodus. Nothing can, however, be more erroneous than such a supposition; and when the text of the Scripture narrative is properly translated and understood, it will be manifest that the history of the sojourn of the children of Israel in Mitzraim and among the Mitzrites is applicable to a different country and a different people.

It has already been shown[2] that the Mitzraim of Scripture, the country into which the Patriarch Abram went down, and after him his grandson Jacob and his sons, may far more reasonably be assumed to have been a region adjoining the Negeb or South Country and the land of the Philistines than the more distant Egypt watered by the river Nile. That the inhabitants of that country, the

[1] Contra Apion, lib. i. cap. 26.
[2] Chap. ii. pp. 49–51 of this work.

Mitzrites, were not Egyptians, may be shown by the following considerations.

The invasion of the Hyksos or Shepherds, whose remains have also been exhumed by M. Mariette, was described by Professor Owen, on the occasion just referred to, as having "introduced into Egypt the Arabian blood."—He now calls them Syro-Arabians,—and it is to them that Egypt was indebted for the horse, as a beast of draught, inasmuch as previously to this Philistine or Arabian invasion the manifold frescoes on the tombs of Egyptian worthies show no other soliped than the ass. The dromedary, he added, was a still later introduction.

But we find numerous passages in the Hebrew Scriptures wherein mention is made of the horse in connection with the former country,[1] and we also learn therefrom that Mitzraim was from the earliest ages famous for its horses;[2] whilst at a later date Solomon had those animals brought from thence;[3] and in the reign of his successor, Shishak, King of Mitzraim, came up against Jerusalem "with twelve hundred chariots and threescore thousand horsemen;"[4] and as regards the dromedary ("camel"),

[1] See Gen. l. 9; Exod. xiv. 6-9, &c.
[2] See Deut. xvii. 16. [3] 1 Kings x. 28, 29.
[4] 2 Chron. xii. 3.

this animal was perfectly well known in Mitzraim from the time of Abraham and Jacob.[1]

Had these animals been known in Egypt at that early period, they could not have failed to be depicted by the Egyptians in their hieroglyphs and frescoes, on which are represented every living creature with which those people were acquainted. It is therefore the veriest truism to affirm that Mitzraim, the country which possessed horses and dromedaries from the time of the Patriarchs, cannot possibly be the same country as Egypt, wherein those animals were unknown till a much later period.

We have now to read the Hebrew Scriptures upon the assumption that the inhabitants of Mitzraim, the country into which "Joseph was carried by the Midianites, were Hyksos or Shepherds, and not the Egyptians, as is usually imagined.[2] In the first place, we read[3] that Joseph was brought down to Mitzraim, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, a Mitzrite, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him

[1] Gen. xii. 16, xxxvii. 25. This argument respecting the early existence of the horse and dromedary in Mitzraim, and their non-existence in Egypt, was employed by me in "Origines Biblicæ," pp. 200, 273, and "Vertheidigung gegen Dr. Paulus" (Leipz. 1836), p. 48.

[2] Mitzraim and Philistim, Manetho, Φοίνικες !!

[3] Gen. xxxix. 1.

down thither." On this text the objection has been raised by Professor Lepsius that[1] "here, as in all other passages where the 'Egyptian' King is mentioned, he is called Pharaoh:" and he adds, that, "This is an Egyptian designation, and not a Semitic one, as we should have expected if the Semitic Hyksos had still ruled in 'Egypt.' In that case we should have been everywhere compelled to admit, in this designation, throughout the history of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, an anachronism which cannot easily find a parallel." Yet nothing is easier than to find such a seeming anachronism right before our eyes at the present day.

Shortly before the commencement of the Christian era the Celtic country of Gallia or Gaul was invaded, overrun, subjugated, and colonised by the Romans, from whom it received its institutions, its language, and pagan religion. Nearly five centuries after its conquest by Julius Cæsar, Gallia was invaded by the German tribe of Franks under Pharamond, who took the place of the Romans, so that the Greek historian Procopius, writing in A.D. 550, could say of them,[2] "the Franks are on

[1] See Professor Lepsius's "Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, and Mount Sinai," p. 476.

[2] De Bello Vandalico, i. 3.

85195

the frontiers of Italy; they were formerly called Germans,"—who founded a monarchy, which, under various changes and several dynasties, may be said to have subsisted down to this day. But all these dynasties have been not of Gallic, but of German extraction; whether the Merovingians, under whose rule Pagan Gaul became Christian France, the Carlovingians, who raised France to the highest rank in Western Christendom, or the Capetingians, descendants of Count Robert the Strong, the Maccabæus of the West Frankish realm, the patriarch of the old Capets, of the Valois, and of the Bourbons.[1] And so completely and incessantly do the descendants of the Frankish invaders of Gaul bear testimony to their German origin, that nineteen French sovereigns have been named Louis, ten Charles, four Henry, and two Robert, all which honoured names, as is patent, are corrupted forms of the hated "barbarian" German designations Ludwig, Carl, Heinrich, and Rothbart. And it is a curious fact that at the present day the three aspirants to the throne of France all bear German names—Henri (Heinrich), Comte de Chambord; Robert (Rothbart), Comte de Paris; and Louis (Ludwig) Napoleon. The origin of Robert the

[1] See Freeman's Historical Essays, p. 222.

Strong is discussed by M. Mourin, and more fully by Dr. Kalckstein in his first *Excursus*. He was the son of the Saxon Wittikind, and the father of Odo, Count of Paris, whose son was Hugh Capet. Mr. Freeman tersely says, "The Count of Paris was merged in the Duke of the French, and the Duke of the French was soon merged in the King."

This, then, is sufficient answer to the argument that, whatever may be our belief on other grounds,[1] it would be *impossible* to combine with it the circumstance that Joseph received from Pharaoh an "Egyptian" name. The like may be said with respect to the other "Egyptian" proper names occurring in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as "Pharaoh," "Rameses," "Pithom," "Asemeth," "Potiphorah," as having been used in Mitzraim.

Dr. Lepsius next objects, that when the sons of Jacob spoke among themselves in the presence of Joseph of their conduct towards him, they spoke out loud in his presence; and that "they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter."[2] And hence he argues that "Joseph had become so completely an Egyptian, and the Egyptian language was so exclusively spoken at the court of Pharaoh, that the brethren

[1] Lepsius's Letters, p. 478.

[2] Gen. xlii. 23.

could not conjecture any one was near them who understood their language."[1] But, as it is replied in my "Origines Biblicæ," in answer to the same objection on the part of other commentators;[2] "the fact appears to have been overlooked, that although Joseph's brethren knew not that he understood or overheard them, because the *melîtz* (the interpreter or officer) was between them, yet as there is nothing in the Scriptural statement to lead to the supposition that they spoke entirely apart from Joseph and the *melîtz*, the latter individual it is evident must have both overheard and understood them, and they must consequently have been fully aware that by his report Joseph might be made acquainted with what they said, just in the same way as if he himself overheard them. Is not the following, however, the proper explanation of the transaction? Joseph, having resided in Mitzraim above twenty years, and having become a naturalised Mitzrite, may not have been known to foreigners otherwise than in the character of a native, and he may indeed have been desirous, as a matter of policy, that his foreign extraction should be concealed. Hence in his communications with his brethren, who came before him as natives of the adjoining

[1] Lepsius's Letters, p. 479. [2] Origines Biblicæ, pp. 247, 248.

country of the Philistines, he may have thought fit to employ an interpreter to translate their rustic dialect of the south country into the more polished language of Mitzraim Proper;—for we may well imagine that, notwithstanding the common origin and closely intimate connection of the two tongues, they may each, when spoken, have been as unintelligible to the natives of the other country, as we find instanced in so many of the cognate dialects of Modern Europe. But whilst the brothers thus spoke to Joseph through the interpreter in the language of the south country, they may also have conversed among themselves in the Aramitish tongue of the country in which they had been born; and as they may have had reason to know that the interpreter was not acquainted with that language, so neither could they have had the slightest ground for imagining that Joseph, whom they looked upon as a native Mitzrite, would understand them,—since even for the purpose of communicating with them in their adopted language of the south country he seemed to require an interpreter." Another objection is, that when, on their second visit to Joseph's house, his brethren were about to take their meal, it is said, "And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and

for the 'Egyptians' which did eat with him, by themselves: because the 'Egyptians' might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the 'Egyptians.'"[1] On which the learned Professor remarks, that "the native Egyptians could never have expressed this horror and regulated their manners accordingly, under the dominion of a Semetic reigning family"—that is to say, during the sovereignty of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. And he further objects that "it is equally improbable that Joseph would have advised the immigrating family to call themselves shepherds in order to obtain from Pharaoh a country set apart for themselves. 'And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the "Egyptians."'[2] If the Shepherd people of the Hyksos reigned in Egypt, how could the shepherds have been an abomination to them?"[3]

This is precisely the question I myself asked long

[1] Gen. xliii. 32. [2] Gen. xlvi. 33, 34.
[3] Lepsius's Letters, p. 479.

ago; and have myself answered on more than one occasion, by showing that the word "abomination" used in this and in other passages in the Pentateuch, and elsewhere, is a mistranslation of the Hebrew word תועבה (*to'ebah*).

The word in question is derived from the root תעב [*ta'ab*], of which Gesenius says in his Lexicon (edit. Robinson, 1855), 'the primary idea seems to be *to thrust forth* or *away*, *to drive away*, and hence *to reject*, *to abhor*, *to abominate*;' comparing it, however, with תאב [*taab*], to which he gives the double meaning of '*to desire*, *to long after*,' and '*to abominate*, *to abhor*.'

But I conceive that the two roots are, in fact, identical—the gutteral ע in the one being softened into א in the other—and that their primary meaning is not *to thrust forth* or *away* in a bad sense alone, but indefinitely *to put away* or *aside*, *to set apart*, *to separate*, either in a good or in a bad sense, and hence *to dedicate* or *consecrate*, and this too either for a good or for a bad purpose, as is so remarkably the case with the root קדש [*kadash*].

The Greek *ἀνάθεμα*, the Latin *sacer*, the French *sacré*, and even the English *sacred* and *devoted*, have all this double meaning and application.

These last two words are thus used together in a bad sense by Milton :

> 'But to destruction sacred and devote.'
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 208.

Consequently the primary meaning of the Hebrew noun-substantive *to'ebah* is a 'person or thing set apart,' belonging to a distinct class, and thus appropriated or dedicated to some special purpose, religious or otherwise; and when the expression came to acquire a more definite meaning, either in a good or a bad sense, the context was in each case sufficient to determine in which of those senses it was employed. The *taboo* of the South-Sea Islanders offers an exact parallel. It is *taboo* for the two sexes to eat together, just as it was *to'ebah* for the Mitzrites to eat with strangers (Gen. xliii. 32); and in like manner many persons, animals, and things are *taboo*,[1] as shepherds and goatherds, and their flocks were *to'ebah*. The resemblance of the two words *to'ebah* and *taboo*, I look on, however, as purely accidental. There is no sufficient reason to suppose the one to be derived from the other.

The following note is made in Gesenius's Lexicon on the word אבה, the meaning of which is *to*

[1] See note on Exodus xiii. 2, Bagster's Compr. Bible, and see the Greek ἁγιάζω.

be willing, inclined, to desire:—'In Arabic this verb has the sense *to be unwilling, to refuse, to loathe*, corresponding to the Hebrew לא אבה. But this must not be regarded as a contrary signification; since the idea of *inclining*, which in Hebrew implies *towards* any one, expressing good-will, in German *Zuneigung*, is in Arabic merely referred to the opposite direction, *i.e.*, *from* or *against* any one, expressing ill-will, in German *Abneigung*, *i.e.*, aversion, loathing.'

When, therefore, Joseph told his brethren to say to Pharaoh, 'Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle,' he did so not because every shepherd was "an abomination" unto the Mitzrites, which would have been an absurdity, but because among these people the shepherds formed a respected *separate* class—were *taboo*—were 'high caste,' as the Brahmins are in India.

In fact, there ought not to be any doubt as to the signification of the word. If the narrative of Joseph's presentation of his father and brethren to the King of Mitzraim be only regarded from a plain, common-sense point of view, independently of its traditional interpretation, it must convince even the most sceptical that the expression in question has been wrongly translated.

The Hebrew slave Joseph, who has become the favourite Minister and Viceroy of the King of Mitzraim, causes his father and brethren to join him in the country of his adoption. Before introducing them to his sovereign, he tells them that he shall represent them to him as shepherds; and he desires them, when questioned, to confirm his statement. The reason he gives for this is, that among the Mitzrites 'every shepherd is *to'ebah*.' I know not how to translate this expression into English so as to retain the double meaning of the original; but it may be rendered in Latin *omnis pastor est sacer*, and in French *tout pasteur est sacré*. Joseph's family do as they are directed. The King receives them most graciously, and says to his Minister: 'Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee. The land of Mitzraim is before thee. In the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell. And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.'[1]

Now if the word *to'ebah* meant 'an abomination,' in like manner as the Latin *sacer* and the French *sacré* might be understood to mean 'accursed,' and if the fact were that the Mitzrites

[1] Gen. xlvii. 5, 6.

'held shepherds in the utmost contempt' (which, however, is merely an assumption consequent on the received translation), is it consistent, is it at at all probable, is it indeed possible, morally speaking, that Joseph should so expressly, and seemingly so unnecessarily, have desired his father and brethren to volunteer the avowal that they belonged to that despised and detested class? And would the King have treated the nearest relatives of his favourite Minister in so contemptuous, so abominable a manner, and so disgraced that Minister himself, as to employ them in such a degraded occupation?

But if the expression in question has the meaning for which I contend, in like manner as the Latin *sacer* and the French *sacré* may mean 'sacred,'—if shepherds were a respected, separate, even if not sacred, class among the Mitzrites, were freemen, gentlemen, or nobles, according to our modern ideas, then the whole transaction becomes natural, consistent, and intelligible. Joseph designedly represented the occupation of his family to be such as would qualify them for admission into a select and superior class among the natives of the country, and the Monarch on his Minister's representation unhesitatingly recognised their right

of admission; and, further, in order to manifest his esteem for them, and to do them and his favourite himself the greater honour, he at once appointed some of them to have the charge of his own cattle, not as mere herdsmen, but in some such capacity as we may imagine to be equivalent to rangers of the royal parks and forests with us.

Accepting this as being the meaning of the word *to'ebah*, and as establishing the fact that in the time of Joseph shepherds formed a select and superior class in charge of the 'sacred' animals of the Mitzrites, we may understand how, at the subsequent period of the Exodus, when Pharaoh ordered the Israelites to sacrifice "in the land," Moses said,[1] "It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the sacred animal [*l'animal sacré*, not le *sacré animal*] of the Mitzrites to Jehovah our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the sacred animal of the Mitzrites before their eyes, and will they not stone us?" The meaning of which indisputably is, that the animal which the Israelitish leader purposed sacrificing—namely, a "lamb, . . . a male of the first year, . . . taken out from the sheep or from the goats,"[2]—was an object of special care and regard, even if not of worship, among the Mitzrites, under

[1] Exod. viii. 25, 26. [2] Exod. xii. 3-5.

the charge of a separate class of men; sheep and goats being *taboo*, like their keepers.

That at that early period these 'sacred' animals were actually adored or worshipped by the Mitzrites may, however, be doubted. There is nothing in the Scripture history to warrant such an assumption, or even the belief that the Mitzrites were worshippers of animals or idolaters, *like* the ancient Egyptians.[1] [In a paper on the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, printed in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature," vol. ii. (xviii.) p. 385, Sir E. Coleridge unqualifiedly expresses the same opinion.] And therefore all that we are justified in concluding, and it is sufficient for the present purpose, is, that among the Mitzrites, Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, shepherds and their flocks were, as is most natural, objects of regard and reverence,[2] and not 'an abomination,' as the word *to'ebah* has been so erroneously supposed to mean.

The statement recently made by Mr. Petherick, formerly British Consul at Khartum, respecting the regard in which the Dinkas tribes on the Upper Nile hold their cattle, is illustrative of what I conceive the custom of the Mitzrites to have been.

[1] See Origines Biblicæ, p. 305.

[2] In the "Times" of the 25th inst. it is asserted that the volcano of Tongariro is regarded by the Maoris as *tapu*, or "sacred."

Colonel Grant having attributed the superior physique of the Dinkas to that of the Shillūks to the fact of their "fattening themselves on their herds," Mr. Petherick replied, that though both tribes possess enormous herds of cattle, it is well known that "neither tribe will kill one of their herd for consumption. They will eat them after death from accident or natural causes, but will not kill them for food, no matter to what extremities they may be put for want of nutriment." And as an instance of this, Mr. Petherick relates that while travelling through the *Awan*, a sub-Dinka tribe, he had bought a bullock, and having unwittingly ordered it to be slaughtered before the Chief and his followers had quitted his temporary camp, he stood in imminent danger of an attack from the tribe for having insulted and degraded them by slaying the animal in their presence.[1] Here there does not appear to be any idea among the Dinkas of worshipping the animals, the bodies of which they do not scruple to eat after death from accident or natural causes; neither can they regard their lives as sacred, inasmuch as they sold one to Mr. Petherick; but on his unwittingly happening to slaughter the animal in their presence he exposed himself to a similar danger to that which

[1] The Times, July 15, 1874.

Moses knew he and the Israelites would run were they to sacrifice—that is to say, slaughter for eating—the *to'ebah* of the Mitzrites before their eyes.

Though the Jews of later ages appear to have generally understood the expression in question in a bad sense, in which they have been followed by all Christian translators in deference to the Septuagint Greek version, it is manifest, nevertheless, from the Targum of Onkelos, that such was not the unanimous acceptation of the term even down to so late a period as the commencement of the Christian era; for the two texts above cited are thus rendered by that most learned Rabbi, as is shown in Mr. Etheridge's English translation, *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan*, &c.: 'because the Mizraee *keep at a distance* all shepherds of flocks,' which is almost precisely the primary meaning I attach to the root *ta'ab;* and 'because *the animals which the Mizraee worship* we shall take to sacrifice,' which is the secondary meaning, in a good sense, for which I likewise contend.

It is proper to explain that this highly important error in the Greek and other versions first presented itself to me on October 8th, 1833, as appears from an entry in my notebook under that date. In my work "Origines Biblicæ," published in the following

year, I merely alluded to the subject in a note in page 241, intending to discuss it in a second volume; but the reception my work met with was such that I had no inducement to continue it. Nevertheless, two years afterwards, when answering an adverse critique in the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, from the pen of the late Dr. Paulus of Jena (*Vertheidigung*, &c., pp. 45–47), I entered into the subject at some length.

At that time, and indeed until quite recently, I did not know my interpretation of the word *to'ebah* to be almost identical with that of Onkelos, or I should gladly have cited this venerable authority in support of my argument for the radical distinction between the Mitzrites, Hyksos, or Shepherds, among whom the Israelites were in bondage, and the Egyptians of profane history, which distinction M. Mariette's discovery of the remains of the former people has now demonstrated to be a fact.

Twelve centuries after the date of the important event in the history of the progenitors of the Israelitish nation on which I have thus dwelt, the Father of profane history speaks of the Mendesians, who, occupying a portion of Lower Egypt in the direction of ancient Mitzraim, may not improbably have derived some of their usages

from the natives of that country; and he relates that they[1] 'pay reverence to all goats, and more to the males than to the females,' adding, quite consistently, that '*the goat-herds* who tend them *receive greater honour.*' At that time, however, by the ordinary process of development, the religion of the Mendesians had become so debased and brutalized, that the he-goat, in the character of the god Pan, was the direct object of divine worship, or, to use the erroneous expression of the Septuagint translators, was their 'abomination.'

From what has thus been said, it will be seen how little ground there is for Professor Lepsius's conclusion from the same premises.—"It is therefore evident that Joseph lived at an Egyptian, and not a Semitic [Mitzritish] court; the old tradition of the Jewish interpreters, that Joseph came to 'Egypt' in the reign of a Shepherd King, Apophis, is entirely destroyed, as well as the view taken by more modern scholars concerning the Hebrew chronology of that time."[2] The evidence from every quarter really is that Joseph came into Mitzraim during the reign of a Shepherd King, and that he lived at a Mitzritish court. As to the proper

[1] Herodotus, ii. 46. [2] Lepsius's Letters, pp. 479, 480.

name of the Pharaoh at whose court he lived, we require far more trustworthy testimony than we at present possess, to warrant us in believing it to have been Apophis, or any other name of the Manethonic lists.

The further question as to the Pharaoh in whose reign the Exodus of the Israelites actually took place is attended with still greater difficulties. The supposition is that the "new king over Mitzraim who knew not Joseph,"[1] in whose reign Moses was born, was of a different race from the Pharaoh whose Minister Joseph had been—was no longer a Shepherd King, is untenable, for the reason that the *to'ebah*, or the sacred animal of the people under whom the Israelites were in bondage, was the same as it had been when Joseph's brethren were set apart by Pharaoh to be the "rulers over (his) cattle."[2]

Josephus attributes this notion to Manetho, and gives some most distorted accounts of the Exodus, which he professes to repeat in the very words of the Egyptian scribe. Even if confidence might be placed in the report of the Jewish historian, which, seeing the manner in which he himself manipulates the history, is exceedingly questionable, there are

[1] Exod. i. 8. [2] Gen. xlvii. 6.

points bearing on the subject which are highly deserving of consideration.

The first is the facility with which the transfer of the name of Mitzraim to Egypt may have taken place, so that the traditions of the one country may, together with its name, have passed into and become incorporated with the national history of the other. We have an instance of this in the Eastern or Greek Empire, which acquired the denomination of the Western or Roman Empire; the language of modern Greece being called, not 'Hellenic,' but 'Romaic;' and 'Roman' (*Ρωμαῖος*), not 'Greek,' being the name by which, previously to the separate existence of the kingdom of the Hellenes, a Christian Greek distinguished himself from the Mohammedan inhabitants of his country.

This confusion of names has led to a singular, and it may be most important result in Abyssinia. It is an historical fact, that in the fourth century that country received its first Christian missionaries from 'Rome,' that is to say, from the Greek Church of Constantinople, or *New* Rome. At the present day the Roman Catholic missionaries in that country represent themselves, truly enough, as coming from 'Rome,'—only in this case the name means

Old Rome; and as the Abyssinians have no very extensive geographical or historical knowledge, and as the Romish priests, more politic than their predecessors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, modify their ritual, and cloak if they do not actually modify their dogmas, so as not to offend native prejudices, they are making steady progress in the diffusion of their faith, which the ignorant Abyssinians are thus led to imagine to be that of the Fathers of their Church; just in the same way as the Jews of Alexandria imagined their forefathers to have been in bondage in Egypt.

And in the second place, the traditions and histories of the two countries having got mixed up together, we may perfectly understand that the scribes of Egypt might be disposed to give a favourable colour to events in the history of Mitzraim as if they belonged to their own national history. In what form they would have been likely to do this may be instanced by the native Burmese account of the British invasion and conquest of that country.

Ritter in his "Erdkunde von Asien," Bd. 4, s. 270, 271, 2te Ausgabe, says, when speaking of the Burmese von oben lien, that the *Political Lie* is authoritatively sanctioned among them. In the court

chronicle, the historiographer gives the following account of the last English war :—"In the years 1186 and 1187 (A.D. 1824 and 1825), the *Kulapyu* (*i.e.*, the white strangers) from the west made war against the Master and Lord of the Golden House. They landed at Rangoon, which place they took as well as Prome. Owing to his clemency and goodness, the king desired to spare human life, and therefore did not oppose them, so that the strangers were allowed to advance as far as Yandabu. They had, however, invested large sums of money in this expedition; and when they reached Yandabu they found themselves in want and in great distress. They therefore implored the King to help them, and he, in his mercy generously sent them large sums of money to enable them to pay their debts, and he then commanded them to leave the country." On this Ritter remarks: "Such is their historical truthfulness, and from it we may judge the little value of their chronicles." But on the other hand, it has to be observed that the actual historical facts are stated: the landing of the British, their taking of Rangoon, their advance as far as Yandabu; the payment to them of large sums of money, and their consequent departure from the country. It is the motives for their conduct that are falsely stated,

whereby a totally untrue colour is given to the occurrences recorded.

But, after all, there is nothing extraordinary in this. How seldom, even in Europe, is history written more accurately than we here see it written in Burmah. Too often, indeed, do we find the facts not merely misrepresented and distorted, but absolutely falsified; as, for instance, in the war bulletins of the first Napoleon, and as in the rival reports of the opposing parties in the Spanish Carlist war of 1874, from which it is often impossible to decide on which side the advantage really is.

I can only say that, under all the circumstances, it is fervently to be desired that some able Egyptologist, possessing a full and intimate acquaintance with all the facts, will be bold enough to emancipate himself from the Manethonic trammels, and from the preconceived ideas which they have only served to render inveterate, and with the greater light we now possess, will *impartially attempt to reconstruct* the chronology and history of Ancient Egypt, and with it those of *Ancient Mitzraim*, as far as may be practicable upon a surer, more consistent, and more intelligible basis. I saw it announced[1] that Dr. Samuel Birch of the British

[1] Athenæum, June 20, 1874.

Museum is writing a small popular History of Egypt for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. It has to be seen how far this will meet the case.[1]

For myself, I have here to do with that ancient history so far only as it is connected with the Exodus of the Israelites; and with respect to these points I think it may be taken to be sufficiently well established that the people among whom the Israelites were in bondage were the Mitzrites, Hyksos, and Shepherd Kings; and further, that the new king over Mitzraim who knew not Joseph was of the same race as the Pharaoh whose Minister that Patriarch had been; the country of those Mitzrites being situated to the east of Egypt Proper, and lying, as was suited to the habits of a shepherd people, beyond the limits of the periodical inundations of the river Nile.

These are postulates which must be accepted as the basis on which the general history of the Exodus is to be reconstructed before we can hope to determine the particulars of that history in any manner at all satisfactory.

[1] This has since been published under the title of "Ancient History from the Monuments of Egypt, from the Earliest Times to B.C. 300," 1875.

CHAPTER IV.

NARRATIVE OF DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO DISCOVER "THE TRUE MOUNT SINAI," FROM HIS LETTERS TO HIS WIFE.

WHEN I had finally decided on setting out on my journey to the spot where I had calculated on finding Mount Sinai, in accordance with the views enunciated in my pamphlet "Mount Sinai a Volcano," written whilst I was resident at Nice during the preceding winter, and published shortly after my return to England in June 1873, it became necessary that, not being a geologist myself, I should find some qualified person to accompany me in that capacity. The task was not altogether an easy one. In the first instance, I addressed myself to Professor Ramsay, the able Director of the Geological Survey of England, who was so good as to interest himself on my behalf, in the hope of being able to find some student of the School of Mines, who might be willing to accompany me on the terms I proposed, namely, that I should defray all his travelling and hotel expenses from the time

we left England till our return; but without otherwise remunerating him for his services. I also applied to several personal friends; but all to no beneficial purpose, so that I had almost begun to fear I should not through private channels be able to find any one willing to agree to my terms, and I was thinking of advertising in the public journals, when, at the evening meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, on November 3, 1873, I met Professor Tennant, who asked me a question respecting a certain diamond about which there was formerly a scientific discussion at the British Association, but this subject I need not dwell on here. In the course of our conversation I mentioned to him that I was in search of a young geologist to accompany me on my journey to Mount Sinai, whereupon he at once said, that if the young friend who was standing by his side should feel inclined to go with me, he was the very man. This young friend was Mr. John Milne, whom he introduced to me as having only two days ago returned from Newfoundland, having previously been in Iceland. Of course there was no opportunity for saying much on the subject, but I stated briefly the scope of my expedition, and gave Mr. Milne a copy of my pamphlet ['Mount Sinai a Volcano'], which I had by me,

and it was settled that if he should be disposed to accompany me, he was to write to me. Meanwhile, I ascertained from Mr. Tennant that his young friend was in every respect likely to suit me. He was for some time a pupil of his, and was a very fair mineralogist; he had been a student of the School of Mines, of which he held a scholarship for this year and the next; he was a tolerable draughtsman, and was generally well informed; in fact, he spoke in the highest terms of him. On the following Thursday Mr. Milne wrote to me asking for further information relative to my projected trip, and this led to a meeting on the following Monday. As our negotiations did not progress very rapidly, and as his private affairs seemed likely to detain him in England longer than would suit my convenience, I proposed that I should start alone for Egypt, where I should necessarily be detained some time making arrangements for the further journey, and that he could join me there later on.

Meanwhile my wife and I had agreed that she should pass the winter at Hastings, as she was in too weak health to accompany me as usual on my travels; and I purposed taking her thither to see her settled before I left England, and therefore pro-

posed not to return to London, but to start from Hastings direct for the Continent.

This led to a final arrangement. Mr. Milne expressed his readiness to accompany me, and to start at once, on my agreeing to defray all his expenses out and home, and upon the understanding that his absence from England should not exceed three months. During the few days that we should yet remain in England, he was to attend at the house of the Royal Geographical Society in Savile Row, to learn from Captain George, R.N. (curator of the map room),[1] the use of his travelling mountain barometer, and other instruments, which the Council of the Society kindly lent me for use on my expedition.

Having thus completed my arrangements, I went with my wife, on December 2, 1873, down to Hastings, where I saw her housed for the winter, and on the morning of the 8th I left Hastings for Folkestone, where I had appointed Mr. Milne to meet me. On the way I travelled with a Colonel Gibbon, R.E., with whom I had some interesting talk about Colonel Gordon, who had been engaged by the Khédive to take the place of Sir Samuel Baker in Upper Egypt. Although I do not know Colonel

[1] This very courteous and able officer has since resigned his post at the Royal Geographical Society.

Gordon personally, I should have had no hesitation in introducing myself to him. At the same time it was more *en règle* that I should have a personal introduction to him, and for this purpose Colonel Gibbon kindly gave me his card.

But the continuation of the narrative of my journey will be given from my letters to my wife whilst on this memorable journey.

December 8, 1873.—At Folkestone I met Mr. Milne, who came down from London by the boat-train, and we crossed over to Boulogne together, and proceeded direct to Paris, where we arrived in time for a late dinner. To write about our journey thus far may seem a work of supererogation, and yet it is always a satisfaction to be able say that it was pleasant. To me the condition of the sea is of no great consequence; but to Mr. Milne, who is a very bad sailor, it was important that the weather, though cold, should have been remarkably fine, with the sea as smooth as glass. On the way to Paris we found it excessively cold, notwithstanding that we had the usual foot-warmers. Having seen but very little of my companion, Mr. Milne, in London, I could not be quite sure how we should get on together, but my first day's journey satisfied me that we should not do amiss, and after the completion of the journey I am happy

to be able to record that I was not disappointed in my anticipation.

Of course our principal topic of conversation was what I hoped to do and find where we were going. My pamphlet Mr. Milne had studied well, but there were still many points on which he was desirous of information, and this I was only too ready and willing to give him, so that our conversation did not flag; and as we were during the whole journey alone in the carriage, we could converse without restraint. In the course of conversation my companion showed me a book, which his friend Mr. Tennant had given him just before starting, namely, a copy of the "Travels" of Irby and Mangles, recently republished in Murray's Library. I knew the work, but had not had occasion to refer to it for very many years. On turning over the leaves, my attention was riveted on a description of three *volcanic peaks* seen by the travellers on their way to Petra, at some distance on their left hand, seemingly on, or near to the Hadj route from Damascus to Mecca. Not having a map to refer to, I could not tell the precise position of these volcanoes; but they would almost seem to correspond to the position which I attributed to the Harra Radjlâ of the Arabian geographer Yakut. If so, my work will soon be done: in fact,

it is done for me beforehand. But without a map I cannot be sure, and there is always the danger of these volcanoes being too far to the north and east to suit the position which I attribute to Mount Sinai. We shall see, Inshallah!

Milne showed me a letter which Mr. Poulett Scrope[1] had writen to Mr. Woodward, of the British Museum, on the subject of the "burning bush" (Exod. iii. 2), which I thought might have been a volcanic exhalation—something of the nature of that figured by Professer Wetzstein in his "Reisebericht über Hauran und die Trachonen." Mr. Scrope is much interested in my expedition, and has suggested to me several important subjects of investigation on the spot. My suggestion respecting the "burning bush," has induced him to consult on the subject several of his scientific friends, especially Mr. Woodward. I had suggested the possibility that such appearances might be formed from the deposits from *fumaroles;* but to this it is objected that they are rather due to the ebullition of the pasty superficial crust giving off gas, and bubbling up, so as to form those pillar-like masses seen on the lava basin of Kilauea, represented in Mr.

[1] I have to record, with regret, the death of this eminent geologist, and generous supporter of Dr. Beke's expedition.

Poulett Scrope's work on 'Volcanos,' p. 476. Mr. Brigham, a missionary in Hawaii, describes the boiling up of the lava, which leaves, on cooling, the most fantastic forms. The fact that Dr. Wetzstein speaks of them as being "like black tongues of flame,"[1] would seem to show that these stick-like bodies are not composed of sulphur; but this cannot be asserted for a certainty in the absence of specimens. Altogether there is plenty of room for speculation.

December 9.—We did no more than sleep at Paris, starting this morning at eleven A.M. by the express train for Turin. Before leaving the capital of France I should have liked Mr. Milne to see something of it, had there been time. As it was, I could only suggest that whilst I went to pay a hurried visit to an acquaintance, he should go and see the Palace of the Tuileries, which, in its ruined state, is to my mind the sight most worth seeing in Paris on account of its associations. I cannot look on it without fancying to myself that I see one of the ruined buildings of Ancient Rome, as it was before the interstices between the columns were walled up, so as to turn it to modern uses.

My companion had no such sentimental fancies. *En vrai géologue*, he came back full of the *fossils*

[1] "Wie züngelnde schwarze Flammen," *ut sup.* p. 7.

he had observed in the stones of which the palace is built, which interested him far more than the building itself in its ruined condition. Travelling for five-and-twenty hours consecutively, we arrived the following day at noon at Turin, where we rested for the day, but would not sleep, because I deemed it better to go on the same evening after dinner to Milan, and have five hours more journey before going to bed, and then to rise as much later next morning, so as to catch the train for Venice at 9.20 A.M., instead of having to get up at Turin for the same train leaving that city at 4.40. Travelling in the early morning is much more uncomfortable than late in the evening: the getting up in the cold, and having to pack up, breakfast—and you are lucky if you can get it—and start in the dark, are things above all others to be avoided whenever it is practicable; and it is anything but warm here in the North of Italy in the month of December. I wrote from here to Mr. Bolton to send me out a copy of the best map for my journey.

An amusing episode occurred at Turin with a party of American females—I would not insult our Transatlantic cousins by calling them "ladies"—which, though it caused us some little annoyance at first, was in the result a source of much amusement

to us, and will long continue to be so. Being rather behindhand at the station, we found most of the carriages full, and had some difficulty in finding places. Seeing our position, the guard opened the door of one of the carriages, and desired us to get in. There seemed plenty of room in it, but as Milne and I attempted to get up, we were met by loud cries of "You shan't come in here." Thinking it might be a "ladies' carriage," we were for turning back, but the guard persisted in saying we were to get in; and as we saw there was plenty of room,—there being only three females in a carriage holding eight,—we took our places, though most unwillingly, as one of those, whose fellow-travellers we were thus destined to be, placed herself in the middle of the carriage (where there is a division of the seats), and with her arms akimbo screamed out, "You shan't come here! you shan't come here!" I endeavoured to "tame the shrew" by assuring her that I had no wish to intrude on her and her companions, and I should have much preferred not to travel with them; but she was not to be silenced: especially when, just as the train was going to start, the carriage door was opened and *another male* passenger was shown in. He was a respectable Piedmontese, apparently of the middle class, who

did not know a word of English, and hearing this torrent of abuse poured out, seemed utterly scared, not knowing at all what it meant. He took his seat in silence by Milne's side, next to the door. I attempted a few words of explanation and apology, but I had hardly opened my mouth when our assailant exclaimed, "You need not speak Italian"—pronounced Eye-talian!—"I understand what you say." Of course it was useless to take any notice of this, or of her continued abuse of us men for our ill manners in intruding our company on *ladies.* Interspersed with this, was her calling through the window to a companion, who had joined a party in another carriage, and who could not be induced to leave them; not even to come to the "lunch" of which her friends with us were about to partake. It sounded strange to our English ears to hear the repeated cry at night, "Annie! won't you come to your lunch? Annie! why don't you come to your lunch?" And the absurdity of the expression made such an impression on us both, that during the remainder of our journey our usual call to meals was, "Annie! won't you come to your lunch?" We were most happy to part from our American cousins at Alessandria, they going on to Bologna and we to Milan.

After a good night's rest at Milan, we left that city for Venice at 9.20 A.M. I had purposed calling on Mr. Kelly, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, whose acquaintance, as you know, I had made when we were at Milan towards the end of 1872, and who lives in the Albergo Reale, where we put up for the night. But, as it was too late to call on him, especially as he had arrived from Como only the previous evening, I contented myself with sending my card to his apartment, with "P. P. C., on his way to Mount Sinai." Just before we started, Mr. Kelly came down into the breakfast-room; the omnibus, however, being in the yard, and our luggage loaded on it, we had only time for a few friendly words.

December 11.—We arrived at Venice at 4.15 P.M. My first duty was to despatch a telegram to you announcing my safe arrival thus far; and then Milne and I took our luggage on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer "Simla," by which vessel I had secured our passage. We have a cabin of four berths to our two selves: it is considerably forward, being even with the fore-hatchway; but this disadvantage is more than counterbalanced by our having it to ourselves; besides, the cabins forward do not feel the motion of the screw. Having deposited our luggage in the cabin, we were not

allowed to remain on board, but had to go on shore for the night. We therefore went to the Hotel Danieli, dined, and after dinner I went out with Milne to show him the 'lions'—those of St. Mark, as well as the others. For myself, I have been at Venice twice before, and I am besides so thoroughly *blasé* as regards mere sight-seeing, that I hardly think I would go ten steps to see the finest sight in the world. Yet I heartily enjoy witnessing the excitement of those to whom such sights are a novelty, and I do not altogether dislike acting as cicerone to young fellow-travellers, provided only that they are intelligent beings, and do not put my patience too much to the test by silly questions and remarks. Milne has never been on the Continent before, except for a day or two at St. Malo, in the time of the last Revolution, and the zest with which he views all the novelties among which he passes, is very refreshing and amusing. But the best of all is that his first thought is the mineralogical character of each object that presents itself to his sight. As in the case of the Tuileries, it is not the form, or age, or historical character of the buildings, so much as the *stone* of which it is built. It is the same with him all the way along; it is not the landscape in which he is interested,

but the character of the *rocks*. He will make me a geologist in time.

At sea, past Ancona, 2 P.M., *December* 13, 1873.—When we went on board last evening, the steward told us that the steamer would not start till noon. I was therefore in no hurry in the morning, but went out with Milne to show him the Piazza di San Marco. Still, not wishing to be behindhand, I thought it better to be on board soon after ten o'clock; and well it was that I did so, for when we reached the steamer at 10.25 A.M., I found her, to my surprise, on the point of starting. The bill of health was already made out, with the number of passengers on board, &c.! Our two names had to be added; and as soon as this was done the health officers took their departure, and the vessel started. Another five minutes and we should have been too late. The stupid steward had misled us, and my stupidity was not less in allowing myself .to be misled. Fortunately my usual nervous anxiety to be in time served me in good stead; had I waited, as most people do, till nearly the last moment, so as still to have "plenty of time," I should have been too late. However, all's well that ends well.

Thus far we have had a delightful passage, the sea

being as smooth as when you and I went from Trieste in 1861 on our way to Harran. We reached Ancona by midnight, and then took in cargo all night, which was not the best thing for a quiet night's rest. At 9.30 in the morning we left Ancona, and we are now steaming and sailing before the wind at the rate of eleven knots an hour. The "Simla" is our old ship, which has been some fifteen or eighteen years in the Indian seas, and is now put on the Mediterranean service. With the exception of the officers, the ship has an Italian crew, now shipped at Venice. The English crew are on board as passengers to Alexandria, whence they will be sent home to Southampton *via* Gibraltar. They are a lazy, drunken, disobedient, insolent set, and the Peninsular and Oriental Company have wisely decided on having only Italians in their Mediterranean service. I have really nothing to tell you except that I continue quite well, and get on with Milne, who helps me just as a son might his father.

Brindisi, December 14, *Sunday.*—We arrived at about ten o'clock this morning after a wonderfully smooth passage, and are now busily taking in some 300 tons of coal. We were advised to spend the day on shore on account of the dirt and noise of coaling, and Milne did indeed land as soon as we

arrived, but he did not remain long on shore, being quite disgusted with the place; and no wonder, for it is, as you know, most uninteresting. Knowing the place of old, I remained on board, writing a letter on the "three volcanoes" seen by Irby and Mangles, for insertion in the "Athenæum." I am sorry to say that our commander, Captain Evans, tells me that, on our arrival at Alexandria, we shall have forty-eight hours quarantine. This will be an unfortunate loss of time and money, for we shall have to pay for our keep on board during the two days.

Milne proposes that whilst thus detained on board ship in the harbour, I should give a lecture on my intended journey, both by way of killing time, and also of amusing and instructing our fellow-passengers. He has already spoken to Captain Evans on the subject, who thinks it a good plan, if I have no objection. Of course I have not, as little or no preparation will be necessary, I having merely to read selections from my pamphlet. Milne says that this giving lectures is usual on board American steamers, and that Professor Tyndall gave one going out, and another coming home. I think the plan an excellent one.

And now about Captain Evans. He is your old

friend, the captain of the "Alma," which took you your first voyage from Southampton to Alexandria in 1856! He heard me last night talking about cholera in Mauritius, and so this morning he came and introduced himself to me. I thanked him heartily, as you may suppose, for all his kindness to you on that voyage. It so happens that at table we sit next to the Captain, as our cabins are in the forepart of the vessel, and therefore our seats at the table are not regulated by the position of our berths. Milne, when we came on board at Venice, chose an end seat, in order to provide for his having to run out of the saloon in the event of his feeling *queer*. Our seats turn out to be numbers two and three—the Captain, at the head of the table, being number one. Opposite we have a young man and his wife, apparently newly married, who are going out to India. Next to me is an old Scotchman named Williams, who knew my brother, Colonel William Beek, and his son, Charley, in Sicily. I do not feel at all well to-day, and besides have a nasty hang-nail on the forefinger of the left hand, which has obliged me to get the ship's surgeon to look at it.

At sea, December 15.—We left Brindisi at 6.15 A.M., the weather being even finer and the sea

smoother than it was in the Adriatic. I tell Captain Evans that if you could have known we should have such a passage, you would have been almost tempted to have come with me. I wish you had; only then how should we have managed about the expense? My slight indisposition has passed over, and I am, in fact, all the better for it. A good many passengers came on board at Brindisi, so that we have now sixty-one first-class passengers and a lot of second class. We speak all the languages of the Tower of Babel.

December 16.—The weather is finer than ever. During the night I really thought we were not moving, my cabin being so far forward that in it the motion of the screw and its noise are not felt. Nothing new among the passengers, except that one of them is a Colonel Moggridge, of the Royal Engineers, with whom Milne became acquainted last year on their passage together to America. He came on board at Brindisi, and they have now renewed their acquaintance. He is a brother officer and friend of Colonel Gordon's, and we at first thought he might be going out to join him, but Milne soon learned that he is going right through to India *in quarantine;* that is to say, a special train takes the Indian mails and passengers

across Egypt without communicating with anybody or anything on the road—the train from Alexandria to Suez no longer going through Cairo. On the voyage to Brindisi, and from thence hither, I have been studying the subject of the three volcanic peaks seen by Irby and Mangles, and I have embodied the results of my investigation in an article intended for insertion in the "Athenæum." Milne is a famous preacher of my "gospel;" perhaps I should rather say, an excellent jackal to my lion. He goes about talking with people about me and my expedition in a way I cannot, and could not do; so that by this time the affair is known and talked about by all on board. But I have not fallen in with any one who takes a special interest in it.

December 17.—Still lovely weather, and it is now getting warm. To-morrow morning we shall be at Alexandria, Inshallah! (Please God). In anticipation of our arrival, I have completed the following article for the "Athenæum":[1]—

"During my journey from England I have been looking into the 'Travels in Egypt,' &c., of Captains Irby and Mangles (Murray, 1868), which my companion, Mr. Milne, has happened to bring with him—a work which I may possibly have seen in an earlier

[1] See Athenæum, 3d January 1874.

edition in years gone by, but of which I have no recollection—and to my surprise and delight I have lighted on the two passages which are here transcribed. The one is in page 115,[1] describing their departure from Gharundel, between Kerek and Petra, on the east side of the Ghor, the prolongation of the valley of the Jordan south of the Dead Sea, where it is said, 'Our road was now south-west, and a white line in the desert, at a distance to the left, as far as the eye could reach, was pointed out as the hadj road to Mecca. *We noticed three dark volcanic summits, very distinguishable from the sand. The lava that had streamed from them forms a sort of island in the plain.*' And in the next page, on their arrival at Showbec or Shobek, they say, 'We had a most extensive view from here, comprising the whole skirts of the desert, *with the volcanic hills which I have mentioned.*'

"As I have not a map here with me to which I might refer, I cannot comment, except in general terms, on the very important facts brought to my knowledge in the foregoing extracts. But from these it appears that the travellers, when taking a south-west course, saw to their left the road to Mecca, which, of course, bore south-east or there-

[1] Irby and Mangles' "Travels in Egypt," London, Murray, 1868.

abouts, where it passed through Akaba-esh-Shami; and from the white line of this road, stretching as *far as the eye could reach,* and the more distinct description of the dark volcanic summits, with their lava field, forming, as it were, an island in the plain, the legitimate inference is that the former is more distinct than the latter: that is to say, the volcanic region lies to the west of the hadj road running along the meridian of Akaba-esh-Shami, which is in 36° E. long.

"In what parallel of latitude the same are to be placed depends on the distance the travellers were able to see, and this again will in part depend on the height of the volcanic summits and the state of the atmosphere. But it seems to be quite certain that they must be situate at some distance to the south of the parallel of Petra and Ma'an, which is about 30° 20′ north, and that, therefore, they lie within the Harra Radjlà, of which the limits are pretty accurately determined by the reports of Burckhardt and Palgrave, the former of whom appears to have skirted it on the east, and the latter on the north, as is shown in page 43 of my pamphlet ['Mount Sinai a Volcano']. It is within the range of possibility that Mount Sinai itself is one of these 'three volcanic summits' of Irby and

Mangles; but I doubt it, being rather of opinion that the mountain which 'burned with fire unto the midst of heaven' at the time of the delivery of the Law unto Moses, is a separate volcano, standing further to the south, but situate always within the same volcanic region as the other three, and forming part of the same chain of mountains of igneous origin. Under this view, the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram may have occurred somewhere on the flank of one of these more northerly volcanoes.[1]

"In any case, the Harra Radjlâ, of which Mount Sinai forms a part, appears to be now shut in by the Wady Arabah on the west, Palgrave's route through Ma'an on the north, and the hadj road between that town and Akaba-esh-Shami on the east; and as on the south it must necessarily be limited by the road from the head of the Red Sea eastward, that is to say, from Akaba to Akaba-esh-Shami, there can be no serious difficulty in reaching Mount Sinai from Akaba by the way of Wady Ithem, the Etham of the Exodus, and as I hope to have it shortly in my power to do."

3 P.M.—The weather is finer than ever, but being now in the open sea, the vessel rolls a little, though

[1] See "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 43.

nothing of consequence. We have had a splendid passage, and expect to be at Alexandria by ten o'clock to-morrow morning, this being about seventy-six hours. You and I did it, you know, in seventy-two hours, but the old "Simla's" bottom is very foul, and her engines are not so good as they were once. Like myself, both she and they are not so young as they used to be. We have on board three Italian girls, second-class passengers, who are said to be going to the Khédive's *Harîm*, to make dresses for His Highness's ladies. We have also a *prima donna* going to the theatre at Alexandria. I have not seen the lady, but I hear she has been singing in the cuddy. Last night I had a long talk with General H——, who is going out to India. My friend Captain Burton was in his regiment, and we had a long talk about him. He says he is wonderfully clever, &c. My neighbour, Mr. Williams, was with Burton a few days ago in Istria, where they were travelling, which seems to be the reason why he did not answer my last letter.

December 18.—During the night the sea got rather rougher, and this morning we had the trays laid on the table for our plates. At tiffin the ship gave such a lurch that everything was sent flying!

However it got better as we neared the land, and by 2 P.M. we were in the harbour of Alexandria. I had a telegram announcing our safe arrival all ready, and sent it on shore in the purser's despatch-box, so that by this time (4 P.M.) it may have reached you—especially if we allow for the difference of longitude. It costs thirty-one shillings, a good deal of money, but at all events you will know that I have arrived safely and in good health.

We have sent off the India mails and some of the passengers' baggage. The rest, with the passengers themselves, will leave at 6 P.M. They cross Egypt *in quarantine*, as I told you before, not being allowed to leave the railway carriages during the whole journey, which will occupy at least ten hours. I do not envy them. In the harbour there is a nice little steamer belonging to the Khédive just come from the Red Sea. She is one of the two boats formerly belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company—the "Vectis," the other being the "Valetta"—which used to carry the mails between Malta and Marseilles. I have made the passage in one of them: her companion was lost some time ago in the Red Sea. I should like much to have her to take me to Akaba: she

is only nine hundred tons, and so would be *quite big enough to carry me and all my suite!* There are several of the Khédive's steamers lying in the harbour doing nothing, and I am told that there are plenty more at Suez employed in the same manner.

It is not certain yet whether we shall have two days' quarantine. The Austrian Lloyd's boat, which arrived yesterday, has been admitted to *pratique*, and perhaps we may be to-morrow morning. Meanwhile we have the yellow flag at the masthead, and a couple of *guardiani* on board to prevent communication with the shore. The weather is fine, but there is a strong wind blowing, which makes it very cold still. My finger is not quite well yet. We have been about seventy-nine hours on the voyage from Brindisi—eighty nominally, but we gain an hour on the longitude. The contract time is seventy-five hours, and we should have done it within the time, had it not been for a heavy current setting in against us. I have given Captain Evans my address at the London Institution, and invited him to call on me there, where he will be always sure to hear of me. He has promised to do so, but does not expect to be in England for some time to come. He only joined the "Simla" at Venice,

having come overland from England, where he has been staying several months: he is now commander of the Peninsular and Oriental fleet. You may imagine the confusion we are in; but we shall be quieter for a while as soon as the Indian passengers have left. Colonel Moggridge goes through to Hong-Kong: he is much interested in my pamphlet, and has commissioned Milne to send him a copy of my work as soon as it is published. The passengers all left the ship at 5.30 P.M. to go by the six o'clock train.

December 19.—During the night we had a regular storm, the rain falling in torrents. This morning it is fine again; but a strong north-west wind is blowing, and it is very cold. This is rather different weather to that you and I used to experience in Egypt in former years. Fortunately we got in as we did yesterday afternoon, as otherwise we should have had to lie off the harbour; for in this weather it would have been impossible to enter the port.[1] Before breakfast the health officer came on board to inspect us, and we had all to pass before him. It was a mere form, or rather a mere farce, for several of the passengers never presented

[1] A scheme is now on foot for the improvement of the entrance to the harbour, whereby vessels will be enabled to enter the port in all weathers.

themselves! But we shall have to remain on board till two o'clock to-morrow (Saturday) afternoon, and so I fear I shall not be able to do anything in the way of business till Monday morning, which will be another great loss of time and money. *Pazienza!*

I hear that the Peninsular and Oriental Company have a small steamer, the "Timsah," lying at Suez doing nothing. She is of about four hundred tons, and was sent out to tug the Company's large steamers through the Canal; but they find that the tonnage on her would cost too much, so that she is not used for the purpose intended. She would be the very ship for me, if I could but get her; that is, supposing the Khédive will not assist me; but I trust he will. They say he is very hard up for money, having been able to raise only five or six millions of the loan of thirty millions he is in want of. If only he could be persuaded to help me! Perhaps he may do so in the hope that it will tell in England.

2 P.M.—We have now been half our time in the harbour: the weather is still very dirty, but I think the worst is over, and that we shall have fine weather to-morrow to land in. We have a Dutch artist on board—a M. Van Elven—who is painting

veiws of the ships in the harbour. I wish it were in my power to take him with me. My contemplated lecture is not spoken of. The fact is, that most of our English passengers have left the ship and gone on to India. Those who remain, however respectable they may be in themselves, are but a mongrel set—Germans, French, Italians, &c., who do not much care for such things. This stopping on board is most tedious, there being nothing to do but to walk about and chat on indifferent subjects. The Khédive, I hear, gives general dissatisfaction. He spends money like water, and oppresses everybody. They talk of his reign coming soon to an end. I hope, however, this may not be just yet.

I have been chatting with M. Van Elven, who tells me he is established in Paris, and is now going to Beirût and Damascus: so I recommended him to go on to Harran, which place I told him we visited in 1861, and identified as the Haran of Scripture, the residence of the Patriarch Abraham; and that Mrs. Beke had published a narrative of the journey in 1865, entitled "Jacob's Flight; or, A Pilgrimage to Harran, and thence in the Patriarch's Footsteps into the Promised Land."[1] He said he would make a point of going there. I then spoke to him about

[1] Published by Longmans & Co., London.

my present journey in search of the true Mount Sinai, and he seems a good deal interested in it, and half inclined to go with me. He says he was in Egypt a few years ago, and painted several pictures for the Viceroy, by whom he was *décoré*. He gave me his card. It would be a great thing to have such a person with me; but this is building castles in the air: however, just now there is nothing better to do. The weather still continues bad; but I don't think the wind is quite so strong: I trust it will be better to-morrow, or else we shall get a wetting going on shore.

December 20.—The weather is still so bad that the passengers have signed a round-robin asking for the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steam-tug to take them on shore. The captain was equal to the occasion, having already sent for it! I told him that they are really the P. and O. Company—the "Polite and Obliging." Yesterday a Bengal officer—Colonel Robert Morrieson—borrowed my pamphlet, "Mount Sinai a Volcano," and was engaged all day reading it and making notes. This morning he came to me, and said he was so pleased with it, that he was ready to give ten napoleons towards the expenses of the expedition. This offer was quite voluntary on his part, as we had not

spoken a word together, except on general subjects, during the voyage—it having been Milne, in fact, who lent him the pamphlet. Colonel Morrieson has passed it on to an American artist named Wallin, I believe, who has come to Egypt for the purpose of sketching, accompanied by a Mr. White, who is said to be an American historical painter of eminence. Mr. Wallin has been here before. He speaks as if he were inclined to join my expedition, on account of its opening a new field to him. I was thinking of going to the Hotel du Nil at Cairo, but Colonel Morrieson advised me not to do so, as he says I ought to be among the tourists, some of whom might be inclined to join me. He himself is going to the New Hotel, and suggests that I should do the same; the difference of expense, eight shillings per diem—sixteen shillings twice told—instead of twelve, is a consideration. Still, his suggestion is a good one and deserving of consideration, especially as coming from one whose generous contribution will enable me to bear the extra expense.

As the day advanced it got more stormy, so that there was no possibility of landing in small boats: therefore, at three o'clock, the steam-tug came alongside, and took us all and our baggage on shore. Before leaving the ship, for fear of accidents, I

gave my letter for England to the purser to put in the letter-box, though there is little doubt of my being able to write after landing. On reaching the shore, we were subjected to far more formalities than on former occasions, having to deliver up our passports at the Passport Office, whence they will be taken to the British Consulate, where we are to go for them on Monday.

We did not reach the hotel (Abbat's) till half-past four o'clock, and as soon as we had seen our rooms, I went out to look about me, it being too late in the day for any business to be done. Finding, however, the office of the Austrian Lloyd's open, I looked in on my old friend Signor Battisti, who was very glad to see me, and with whom I had a long talk about my affairs. He told me that the chief of Oppenheim's house here, Mr. Jacques Oppenheim, our friend Mr. Henry Oppenheim's cousin, is at Cairo, but a younger brother of his, Sebastian, is here in Alexandria. Just now the firm does not stand so well with the Khédive, in consequence of the failure of his last loan; but they are trying to get him some more money, and so may soon be in favour with him again. Signor Battisti did not see any difficulty in the way of my getting a steamer from the Khédive, only he says

he thinks I shall have to make my application through General Stanton. This I doubt much, as I do not expect I shall be likely to obtain any more assistance from Her Majesty's representative here, than I obtained from Her Majesty's Government at home, Lord Enfield having written to me from the Foreign Office, on the 7th November 1873, the following letter:—"In reply to your letter of the 5th instant, requesting letters of introduction to Her Majesty's agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and to Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, directing these gentlemen to use their friendly offices with the local Governments, so as to secure to you their protection and assistance, in case of need, on the journey you are about to undertake into Arabia Petræa, I am directed by His Lordship (Lord Granville) to acquaint you that he cannot issue instructions to Mr. Vivian and Mr Moore to ask for facilities on your behalf which are not granted to other travellers; but his Lordship does not doubt that you will receive from these officers all the assistance which they can properly afford."

I could not stay long with Battisti, as he was busy with the Austrian Lloyd's steamer, which leaves early on Monday morning. So I took leave and went to the post-office, to see whether

there were any letters for Milne. The office was shut up, but the clerk, who is always very civil here, looked for them, but there were none. It was now five o'clock, and all the offices were closed or closing, so that nothing more was to be done to-day. It is a great pity; however, I must see what can be done to-morrow morning *before church.*

CHAPTER V.

SOJOURN IN EGYPT.

December 21.—This morning after breakfast my first task was to call on Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co., where I saw Mr. Müller, and also his partner, Mr. Kay, whose acquaintance I made one day in the city when I called on my friend Mr. Tod. I had a chat with them, but not very long, on account of their being busy with the post (though Sunday), the "Simla" leaving to-morrow morning for Brindisi with the mails. From there I went to church, and after the service, Milne and I went, on Mr. Kay's invitation, to dine with him and Mr. Kay at Ramleh, a suburb about five miles from Alexandria, where most of the merchants now live, instead of along the Canal, where they formerly did. There is a railway to it, the fare being one franc fifty cents each way. Mr. Kay is a very intelligent man, and we passed a very agreeable afternoon together. We met there a clever young architect, a Mr. Clarke, who has come to Egypt

on business connected with the South Kensington Museum, and is staying a few days with the Kays before returning to England. I had a good deal of interesting conversation about my expedition, and the means of obtaining a steamer from the Khédive to take me round the pseudo Mount Sinai and up the Gulf of Akaba. Both Mr. Kay and Mr. Müller are of the same opinion as my friend Battisti, namely, that General Stanton is the only one through whom I am likely to succeed, or rather, that I shall not do so *unless* he is favourable, or at all events, is not indisposed towards me. He is at present in Alexandria, but goes to Cairo on Tuesday. Colonel Gordon has not yet arrived.[1]

The acting partner in Oppenheim's house here in Alexandria is a Belgian named Lecluse; but the real head of the house in Egypt is a German named Beyerlé, who resides at Cairo. I am told that my best way is to obtain an introduction to Nubar Pasha, the Foreign Minister, who is all-powerful with the Khédive, though it is doubtful whether he would do anything without General Stanton's sanction. All these particulars are valuable as hints for the line of conduct I am to

[1] This news turned out to be incorrect, for I afterwards learned that Colonel Gordon returned to Europe in the "Simla."

pursue. I see clearly that it will require a good deal of prudence and management, and that I must not be in too great hurry, lest I make a false step.

Whilst I am engaged on business, my companion wanders about and amuses himself as well as he can, which is not a very difficult matter, as he has never been here before, and everything is new and interesting to him. I cannot take him on my business calls, but when Mr. Kay asked me to go home with him, I introduced Milne to him as being with me, and he at once kindly invited him. Besides, he is of actual service to me, for by this time he is well up in "Sinai," and can talk for me when I am not present, and does talk too!

December 22.—Abbat's hotel is very much enlarged and improved since you were here in 1866. The street from the Grande Place to the Place de l'Eglise, where the hotel stands, is now called "Lombard Street." It is well paved and lighted, and also laid out and planted with trees. The Grande Place is also well lighted; but the streets from the post-office to the square are as filthily dirty as ever, several inches deep in mud; quite a disgrace for such a place as Alexandria. It seems now fine clear weather, and not so cold: still, it is

anything but warm. A few days before I left England I wrote to Mr. H. Oppenheim, whose acquaintance you and I made several years ago at dinner at our friend's Mr. J. Tod's, when, you will recollect, it was proposed I should join the Egyptian Trading Company, in the establishment of which I had been so deeply interested. In my letter I told him what I wanted of the Khédive, and asked him to write to his partners or managers here, desiring them to exert their influence with His Highness on my behalf. In reply he told me he had written to his house in Egypt, as requested, and had no doubt they would be able to obtain what I desired. At the same time he kindly favoured me with a letter of introduction to them. This morning, then, my first duty was to call on Messrs. Oppenheim. I saw Mr. L. and Mr. S. O., to whom I presented my letter of introduction. They were both very civil, but said they had no power to move in the business, which was that of the house at Cairo, where whatever is to be done will be done, and whither they had accordingly forwarded Mr. H. O.'s letter. My letter of introduction was in like manner returned to me in order that I might present it to Mr. B. at Cairo.

From Messrs. Oppenheim's I went to the British

Consulate for my passport, and saw Mr. Stanley the Consul, who was very kind and obliging to you and me on our last visit to Alexandria, and who was equally so to me on the present occasion. He gave me a pass at the Custom House for my things when they arrive, which I handed over to Mr. Kay, as I do not intend to remain here. At the Bank of Egypt I cashed two circular notes, receiving for them a fraction over five hundred francs; and then I called on Colonel Morrieson, who had called yesterday on me at the hotel whilst I was at church, and who now kindly gave me his subscription of two hundred francs.

In the afternoon, after luncheon, I went and called on General Stanton, who received me extremely cordially as an old acquaintance, asking after you very kindly, &c. He said he had seen me in church yesterday, though I did not see him. He starts for Cairo to-morrow, and was of course very busy; but he begged me not to hurry away, and talked with me some little time of things in general, and of my expedition in particular. I gave him a copy of my pamphlet, which he promised to look at on his way to Cairo. We did not come to the point—in fact, there was no time; but he seemed very favourably disposed towards me,

and on the subjects on which we spoke together he took care to let me see that we were quite *d'accord.* On one important point he asked my advice, namely, as to the putting down of slavery on the Bahr el Ghazal, the western arm of the Nile. On this subject I came out strong with my notions of flooding the Libyan Desert, and so gaining a road to the interior, to which he listened with attention and interest. I shall go in for this at Cairo, as it is a most important matter. General Stanton was obliged to leave me in order to go and finish his packing; indeed, he was called away by the men who were doing up the cases. He said he hoped to see me in Cairo; expressed his regret that he could not invite me for Christmas Day, as he will not be installed in his new house. Altogether I have reason to be satisfied with my reception, and augur favourably from it. If our Foreign Secretary has not written to him in my favour, at all events he has not written in disfavour. I should not be surprised if the General has been told to help me officiously.

After leaving General Stanton, I called on Dr. Mackie, Dr. Ogilvie's partner, whom I asked to call on me this evening before I went to bed, to look at my foot, which has got a good deal inflamed. When I was with Signor Battisti we spoke of Fedrigo

Pasha, who was formerly a captain of one of the Austrian Lloyd's steamers, with whom I made the passage from Alexandria to Trieste in 1854. He is now an Admiral in the Khédive's Navy. He is a very good fellow, just as simple and unassuming as in past years, and Battisti says he will be delighted to see me, and he might also be of use to me. On my calling on Mr. Robert Fleming, Mr. Alexander Tod's nephew and former partner, and a friend of mine, he also spoke highly of Fedrigo Pasha, and gave me a few lines to him, and likewise to McKillop Bey,[1] director of harbours and lighthouses, a warm-hearted British tar (he is a captain in the Royal Navy), and a regular *pusher* if only he takes a thing up. Not wishing to lose this chance, I called twice on Fedrigo Pasha, but could not see him, and as I intended leaving for Cairo to-morrow, I was obliged to content myself with leaving my card and Mr. Fleming's letter. The latter recommends me by all means to go to Shepheard's, and not to the New Hotel, which is but little frequented by English tourists, among whom it is my object to make my expedition known, and of whom, he says, I shall see more in one day at the former, than in a month at the latter. I had pretty well made up my mind to

[1] Since created a Pasha.

this before. The expense is the same at both, namely, sixteen shillings per day.

It is very fortunate that we got into port as we did on Saturday afternoon, for the storm was more violent than has been known here for many years. There was a small schooner wrecked in the eastern harbour, into which it had entered by mistake, and one man was drowned; the rest being saved from the shore. In the evening, after asking Milne, who had just come in from witnessing an Arab wedding procession, to take my letters to the English post-office, I got ready to receive Dr. Mackie when he came to see my leg. I was sitting in my dressing-gown awaiting his arrival, when the waiter came to say Fedrigo Pasha was down-stairs at dinner, and would be glad to see me. So I had to dress myself and go down. He was in a private room, dining with a Greek gentleman. My card and letter had only been given to him after he had sat down to dinner. Of course I took no dinner, as I had dined; but when the dessert came, I ate a couple of bananas and drank a glass of wine, and then we had coffee and cigars. He received me in the most friendly way. Some men assume high manners with high titles, but Fedrigo was, as Battisti told me, just the same as when I knew him

twenty years ago a captain in the Austrian Lloyd's trading service. He is a very simple-minded man, and has the character of being thoroughly honest and straightforward—rare qualities in these countries. His wife, who is lately dead, was an Englishwoman, and he has lived a good deal in England, where he went to superintend the building of some of the Viceroy's steamers. Whilst sitting at table in company with the Greek, we could only converse on general subjects; but when Dr. Mackie was announced, I took Fedrigo apart, and had a few minutes' private talk with him. He said that the two persons possessing the most influence with the Viceroy are Nubar Pasha, the Foreign, and Ismail Pasha the Finance Minister. The former is a highly accomplished Armenian Christian. He is the man for me to make interest with, and this I can do through General Stanton. If he will not speak to him himself, he could at least give me an introduction to him. The General stands well with the court, and a word from him would settle the matter. From what I gather from all this, it is quite clear to me that without General Stanton's help or countenance, I am not likely to do much, if anything at all, with the Khédive. We shall see how things go on at Cairo.

The conversation with the Greek was a curious one. From Mount Sinai it turned on various subjects, and at length on the meaning of the word 'Christ,' which he said was derived from χρηστος, 'good'—the old error explained and confuted in my work "Jesus the Messiah" (p. 63).[1] Of course I was at home here, and came out very strong. Fedrigo said very little on the subject, but opened his eyes very wide. I fancy I left them both impressed with a profound conviction of my immense learning! Dr. Mackie examined my ankle, which he found a good deal irritated, and prescribed a lotion for it, so that I hope it will soon be all right again. He stayed with me till eleven o'clock chatting, and would not accept a fee.

Cairo, December 23.—We left Alexandria at 9.50 A.M., and arrived at Shepheard's Hotel at 4.30 P.M. It was a delightful day. The country is so wonderfully improved since we were here in 1866, that one would scarcely fancy one's self in Egypt. I shall say nothing about the journey, as I think I will write an article about it to the "Athenæum." Cairo too, you would not know, so much is it altered for the better: the hotel is also vastly improved. The manager, Mr. Gross,

[1] Published by Trübner & Co., 1872.

knew me again, and so did some of the waiters; thus I am quite at home. Before dinner, Milne and I went out to have a look at the New Hotel; it is a splendid building, which will cut Shepheard's out by and by; but at present the visitors there seem principally foreigners. Shepheard's is still the headquarters of the English and Americans, and I think I did quite right in coming here; but the expense is dreadful: two pounds a day will barely cover it. However, it would be the same at the New Hotel, and I am convinced it would not do for me to go to the Hotel du Nil. The Esbekiah (square) garden in front of our hotel is beautifully laid out now, and there was a band of music playing. Fancy our being received with Auber's 'Dame Blanche,' which they began playing when we entered the gardens!

After dinner I made the acquaintance of Mr. Rowlatt, the manager of the Bank of Egypt at Alexandria, who happened to be here. He was very friendly, and introduced me to Mr. Holt, the Cairo manager. He recommended me to send my draft on the Paymaster-General home, as he could not cash it except at a loss of two per cent.; so I must do so when the time comes, and you must send me circular notes. Mr. Rowlatt is of the same

opinion as my friends in Alexandria, which is, that General Stanton is the only man to assist me, *if he will.* I called at Cook's the Tourist's office; but Mr. John Cook was not in. I shall call on him again to-morrow morning, as he is leaving in the evening for England.

December 24.—Mr. Cook will not be here till late this evening, and he does not leave till Saturday. I called this morning on Mr. Beyerlé and Mr. Jacques Oppenheim: they received me extremely well, and entered at once into my plans, about which Mr. Henry Oppenheim had written to them. Mr. Beyerlé said that the business must be done through Nubar Pasha, to whom he would introduce me. He said he was going to see his Excellency *this morning,* and would speak to him about me, and ask him to let me have an audience to-morrow. The result he would let me know this evening; and if all was right, he would call for me to-morrow, and take me with him. They seemed to take it as a matter of course, appearing to have no misgivings —at least, so it struck me. But Mr. Beyerlé told me it might be a matter of some little time, as his Highness is *unwell* just now, so much so as not to be able to see even his Ministers.

On my way to Messrs. Oppenheim, I called on

our friend Mr. Rogers, who lives next door but one to Shepheard's Hotel. He returned home last night from his trip up the Nile, and was gone out riding; so I left my card. But here a most curious thing occurred. The person to whom I spoke in the courtyard of the Consulate, was a large, portly, well-dressed native, a Syrian, whom I took for the Consul's dragoman, or something of the sort.

He asked me if I knew the Consul, how long I had been here, where I had made Mr. Rogers's acquaintance, &c., speaking in very good English; and then, on my telling him, as if recognising me, he asked who was my dragoman? On my mentioning *Mikhail Heneê's* name, he asked whether I had ever been at Shechem (Nablus), and to the Samaritan synagogue; to which I replied, Yes, I had, and that I had reason to remember it, for that I had tumbled down the steps; whereupon he exclaimed, "Give me your hand, sir: you are the gentleman to whom I gave some brandy after your fall." You may imagine my surprise at hearing this. I learned afterwards from Mr. Rogers that he is Yakûb esh Shellaby (يعقوب الشلبى), the head of the Samaritan community, who is come here on a visit to him! Of course we had a long chat together, and on my telling him I was going in

search of the true Mount Sinai, he said he would go with me; to which, of course, I replied, Inshallah! But, seriously speaking, he would not make a bad dragoman. Rogers tells me he is a highly respectable man. It would be a curious thing if, supported by the Jews, and accompanied by the chief of the Samaritans, I went to correct the error of the Christian tradition respecting the position of the Mountain of the Law. I really should be very glad for this Yakûb esh Shellaby to go with us. You know there are only a few Samaritans remaining, and their history is most remarkable.[1] Their version of the Pentateuch—it is not a version, but a *text*—

[1] The following interesting description of the Samaritans of Nablus is given by Mrs. Isabel Burton in her "Inner Life of Syria" (published in 1876):—"In the afternoon we rode up to Mount Gerizim, by far the most interesting. It is a difficult ascent of an hour and a half. On the top are the ruins of a Christian church, and a temple, marked by a little 'wely,' as English travellers say, and an immense *débris*. The mountain is entirely covered with stones. Here are encamped at the top all the Samaritans now existing on the face of the earth. They number 135, and are governed by their Chief and High Priest, Ya'akúb Shalabi."

[Miss M. E. Rogers writing to me upon this subject says: "Mrs. Burton calls Yakûb the Chief and '*High Priest*' of the Samaritans. He is certainly the *Chief* or Sheikh of his people. Jacob *Cohen* is the Priest, but as he is a younger man than Yakûb esh Shellaby; he looks up to him and is guided by him."]

"Here live, entirely apart from the rest of the world, eighty males and fifty females, including children, and here they celebrate their Passover on the 3d of May. We were invited, and wished for an excuse to remain, but if I felt well before the 3d of May we were bound to proceed.

"They showed us a small Square with stone walls, where they celebrate their Passover exactly as the Old Testament dictates

is generally believed to be more correct than that of the Jews. Both are in Hebrew, the Samaritan being in the older character. As long ago as 1836 I published in the 'British Magazine' my opinion in favour of the former, which is nearly, if not quite, the text from which the Septuagint Greek version was made.

After leaving Oppenheim's I took a donkey-boy —not a donkey, for you will recollect how the last time I was here a donkey quietly shot me over his head, and after depositing me in front at his feet, looked down on me with an air of great surprise, as much as to say, What *are* you doing there? He showed me the way to Messrs. Tod,

(Exod. xii. 1–13). From here there is a beautiful view of the Sea, and Moab, and the Plain; also of Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb beneath. The Samaritans were very hospitable. I noticed that they did not like my dog to go near them; and suspecting that it rendered them 'unclean,' according to their faith, I tied him up.

"I will describe the Samaritan women's dress, and will take for a model the wife of Ya'akúb Shalabi" [who is now in England, and who writes to me to say how charmed he is with Mrs. Burton's graphic description of his wife's costume, and adds that her name is 'Shemseh,' *i.e.*, sunny], "who was more richly dressed than the others. She wore large leather shoes, cotton trousers gathered in at the ankle, red-striped silk petticoat to the knee, a jacket or bodice over it. She had on five jackets of different colours, open at the bosom, and each was so arranged as to let the border of its neighbour be seen. A girdle was around her waist, a necklace of chains clasped her throat, and another of large gold coins hung round her neck. Her hair was not shaved or tucked under like our Jewesses, but dressed in a thousand little plaits down her back, a thousand worsted plaits to imitate hair covered her own hair, and hung down her back below the waist, and were fastened off with and covered

Rathbone, & Co.'s, where I saw Mr. Wolff (a German), their agent, with whom I arranged about sending me on my letters as soon as received. I then went to the American Consulate to see Mr. Walmass, to whom I had an introduction from my good old friend Mr. Hugh Thurburn ;[1] but unfortunately he has gone to Constantinople. As I was not to see Mr. Rogers till the afternoon, I thought I would finish my business with the Americans ; so I went with my donkey-boy to find out Dr. Lansing and his colleagues, on whom Mr. Fleming had suggested

with spangles and coins of value. Upon her head she wore a coat of mail of gold, and literally covered with gold coins, of which a very large one dangled on her forehead. She wore diamond and enamel earrings, and a string of pearls coquettishly arranged on one side of her head in a festoon. A yellow handkerchief covered her head, but hung down loose upon her shoulders. Her eyebrows were plucked out, and in a straight line in their place patterns were thickly marked in ink. I thought wrongly that they were in Hebrew characters, but they presented that appearance. A silver charm, like a jewel *etui*, and a little silver book containing a charm, she wore upon her heart. I forgot to add a third thick chain of gold around her neck, and that all the head ornaments were surmounted by a large crescent studded with jewels. . . . We then went to Ya'akúb Shalabi's house in the town. He took us to their present synagogue, a miserable small groined room, hung with a few indifferent lamps. A recess was hidden by a long white counterpane, which had a Hebrew inscription worked upon it in gold, hiding another curtain 350 years old, also inscribed. He then sent out of the room a few Samaritans, and showed us a cupboard containing several old MSS., kept in gold and silver cases, ancient, carved, and scroll shaped. One is held most sacred ; it is a copy of the ancient Jewish law, written on vellum, and said to be 3374 years old. This venerable Pentateuch dates 1500 B.C., to Abishua, son of Phineas, son of Eliezar, son of Aaron (Ezra vii. 5)."

[1] Mr. Thurburn's much lamented death has since occurred.

I should call. They are the Presbyterian missionaries, who have, as it were, taken the place of our Church missionaries since the death of Dr. Lieder; whose widow you will recollect was so kind to us when we were here some years ago.

After wandering about from pillar to post, I was taken to the *German* mission house, where I saw a Dr. Trautvetter, with whom, being pretty well knocked up by this time, I sat talking a considerable time about Mount Sinai. Did not he open his eyes? When at last I was about to leave, he thought he might improve the occasion by suggesting that in thus attending to the *letter* of Scripture I might be neglecting its *spirit*—the more important matter. But I replied that it appeared to me to be quite as important to learn what the letter was truly, of which we had to know the spirit, or we might perchance fall into error as to this latter. We parted, however, on the best of terms, and he expressed himself most anxious to know the result of my investigations, kindly wishing me every success, &c.

I then came home to my lunch (the *table d'hôte* breakfast), where I met Milne, who had been on a voyage of discovery by himself half over Cairo; and among other places, he discovered that he had got into a mosque, where they had led him into

all sorts of places one after the other, making him pay bakshish—a franc—for each. He appeared to be amazingly amused with himself, as much as anything at allowing himself to be so robbed. If he likes it, it is not my affair; only I laughingly told him that if he went on in this manner I should have to take his money from him and 'write to his mother' about him. He puts me in mind of Mr. Latimer Clarke, whom you and I met here on his first visit to Egypt. Everything is so entirely new to Milne, that he really does not know where he is or what he is about. Besides he is only three-and-twenty, and though very well-informed on many subjects, he is as green as grass on others.

I learned at the hotel that Mr. Rogers[1] had called on me while I was out: he had evidently lost not a moment's time after his return home. When luncheon was finished I went off to him again. He received me in the most friendly manner, nothing could possibly be more cordial, introducing me to his wife, and not leaving me many minutes before he invited me to eat my Christmas dinner with them, in which invitation Mrs. Rogers joined. He had, in fact, called on me for the purpose of inviting me. I told him of Mr. Milne being with me, when they

[1] Mr. Rogers is now Director of the Ministry of Public Instruction in Egypt.

kindly invited him likewise. We had a long friendly chat about old times, and I told him about Harran and the new "tradition."

The story of Harran is excessively curious, and is besides most pertinent to the present question of the true position of Mount Sinai. In my "Origines Biblicæ" I contended that the Jews having during their captivity beyond the Euphrates become acquainted with the celebrated city of Harran in Mesopotamia, fell into the not unnatural error of supposing that city to be the Haran of Genesis; an error which was the more readily committed because the Greek word *Mesopotomia* is an almost literal translation of the Hebrew term *Aram Naharaim*, "Aram," or Syria, "of the Two Rivers;" which two rivers, however, I proved to be the "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus," and not the great rivers Euphrates and Tigris. This was in 1834. In 1852 a village called Harran was discovered by the Rev. Joseph Leslie Porter precisely where eighteen years previously I had said it ought to be looked for, without his being at all conscious of the importance of his discovery; and nine years afterwards, namely in 1861, my wife and I went to the spot to verify my identification of it, just as I now propose visiting the true Mount Sinai.

Of our pilgrimage to Harran a narrative was given by my wife in her work "Jacob's Flight." At Harran we discovered a well, which we named "Rebekah's Well," because it was in my opinion that at which the daughter of Bethuel was met by Abraham's steward.[1] At that time no designation of any kind had been given to this well by the people themselves; and, though we were most minute in our inquiries, we could not learn that any history or tradition whatever was attached either to the well or to the troughs near it used for watering cattle, as it is, in fact, expressly recorded in Mrs. Beke's work. Indeed, when we first arrived at Harran, the people of the village denied altogether the existence of any well whatever, as our old friend Dr. Wetzstein, who was with us, can testify. It is scarcely necessary to add that the inhabitants of Harran had not the remotest idea of their village having been the habitation of El Khalil, "The Friend of God," as the Patriarch Abraham is usually called. But they were not slow to adopt my identification of it; and when Major Wilson, R.E. (in 1865), and Mr. John Macgregor, of the "Rob Roy," visited Harran in December 1868, just seven years after my wife and I were there, he was shown what

[1] Gen. xxiv. 10–20.

he described in the "Record" newspaper, as a very curious well called "Abraham's Well," adding that he had never met with stones and cistern more worn than those; the well thus shown to him as "Abraham's Well" by the canny natives being our "Rebekah's Well" which my wife discovered in 1861. But this is not all; two years later, when Captain Burton was Consul at Damascus, he wrote in the "Athenæum" that he knew the Haran well to be called "Abraham's Well" by many Syrian Moslems who had been to that place, and who certainly never heard of Dr. Beke's visit to it in 1861. And since then, on his return to England, he informed me in person that the Moslems of other places besides Damascus, all speak of "Abraham's Well" at Haran, as a matter of notoriety!

The local tradition appears thus to have been immediately set on foot; and within ten years of the time when I made them acquainted with it, my identification of the place has come to be regarded as a notorious "fact," and I, its originator, am lost sight of! This serves to illustrate how "traditions" originate, and consequently how little value they possess in themselves, however long they may have remained unquestioned.

Just before leaving Mr. Rogers, some ladies and

Mr. Clarke, the Consular Chaplain, came in for the purpose of rehearsing the hymn for to-morrow's service. But before doing so, I said a few words to my friend about my wish for a steamer, and that General Stanton might assist me *officieusement* with the Government. I gave him a copy of my pamphlet, which I requested him to look over at once, in order that he might be able to speak to General Stanton on the subject. I had given one also to Mr. Beyerlé, that he might show it to Nubar Pasha. I must not forget to mention that I also spoke to him about the inundation of the Libyan Desert as a means of abolishing the slave trade, and of enabling the Khédive to get near to Darfûr and Kordofan. This seemed to interest Mr. Beyerlé more than the slave trade! I fancy I shall make something of this. M. de Lesseps is here, having arrived yesterday in company with Mr. Rogers. After my visit to the latter I came home to my hotel, and have been "in my *keyf*" the whole afternoon, first taking a cup of coffee and a cigar, then a nap of an hour and a half, and then writing this long letter to you. I think I have done a good day's work on the whole. Poor Rogers suffers much from Nile boils: this year he had no less than one hundred and ten opened with

the lancet. That is living in Egypt for something!

This afternoon Milne found his way to the museum at Boulak, which he went over, only paying one franc. This he looks on as a great feat: he laughs at himself for being so egregiously *swindled* this morning, and says he almost swore he would shut himself up in his room at the hotel, and not leave it till I was ready to go to Mount Sinai. He is a most amusing fellow, and also very useful. He has brought drawing materials with him, and at Alexandria, whilst I went to General Stanton's, he went on and made a drawing of Pompey's Pillar. So if I do not take an artist with me, he will be able to help me in this respect likewise.

And now I have to tell you some good news. This afternoon Mr. Beyerlé called on me to appoint to-morrow morning for my interview with Nubar Pasha. The porter tells me he came while I was out: it may, however, have been while I was in Milne's room next to mine, into which I went for a few minutes after I had finished writing to you. Be this as it may, he left his card. Whatever may be the result of my audience, it is a great step to be at once brought into personal commu-

nication with the most powerful man in Egypt. Should he be favourable, and obtain me the steamer, there would still be much delay in such a country as this. But here "Admiral" Fedrigo and "Captain" Mackillop—Fedrigo *Pasha*, and Mackillop *Bey*, the titles correspond—would be of service to me in pushing matters on, especially Mackillop, if what they say of him be true. Altogether, I trust I am going on well; and I think you will agree with me that I have not been dilatory. I do not believe myself that I have lost a moment. And now I have nothing more to say to-night, except to wish you from the bottom of my heart a merry and happy Christmas, and a still happier New Year. If it please God to bring me home in safety, I think I shall have good and profitable work for the remainder of my days. For my book "Sinai Regained" *must* become a popular work; and if *it* does, so will a larger work on the history of Genesis and Exodus, which I purpose writing afterwards—a second edition, in fact, of "Origines Biblicæ."

Milne is off to the theatre to-night. He is enjoying himself with all his might. It does one good to witness it; only I have to lecture him a little against coming it too strong. He did not go

after all to the theatre, but remained in his room writing to his mother.

December 25, 1873.—A merry Christmas to you and a happy New Year. The same to Mrs. Laurence-Levi, and also to master prinny (our doggy), as he is one of the family, and to Teddy likewise, who, I conclude, is spending his holidays with you. I hope he is a good boy, and that he has made more progress last half. I got up early to look out my things for this evening, and also to sew the elastic band of my pocket-book, which has come undone. On looking into my work-bag, I have found nothing but, to me, invisible needles and invisible thread, which it is quite beyond my powers to make use of, and almost even to *feel*. I do not know who put them up for me. I want needle and thread that I can lay hold of. If Milne has not any, I must buy some. My ankle is much better.

At 9.15 A.M. Mr. Beyerlé called in his carriage to take me to Nubar Pasha. We were at once shown in, and found his Excellency sitting on the divan with an Englishman, named Norris. He at once rose, shook hands with us, and relinquished his place to me, taking a chair by my side, or rather in front of me. He began the conversation in English, when I said that, if he preferred it, we

would speak French, which he talks better than English, though he quite understood this language. After a few words of general conversation, we spoke of my expedition, with the general purport of which he was quite *au fait*. My pamphlet, "Sinai a Volcano," was lying on the divan by the side of where I sat. We then came to the object of my visit, when he at once said that the Viceroy had no steamers in the Red Sea, only one stationed between Massowah and some place I did not catch the name of; but I think it was Berbera. The service of the Red Sea is performed by steamers belonging to a company, which has succeeded the *Aziziah*. He feared there would be great difficulty in doing what I wished. The company's vessels might be inclined to leave me at some place on the Arabian coast; but this, I said, would be worse than proceeding direct from Suez by land. I suggested the importance of my expedition, its exceptional character, &c.; but there was no moving him. After sitting some time I rose to take leave, when I suggested that he might perhaps be induced to change his opinion on reflection. But to this he only shrugged his shoulders, saying he did not see how it could be. So I took my leave and came away. I must mention that we had coffee brought soon after we came in; pipes

were not offered, though Nubar Pasha himself smoked a cigarette. So ends act the first.

Mr. Beyerlé brought me back home. On the way he said that Nubar Pasha had expressed himself to the same effect when he called on him yesterday. He regretted that we had not succeeded, and said he should at all times be at my service, and ready to assist me in any way in his power. Of course he did not, any more than myself, look on this decision as final. General Stanton might be able to induce him to change his mind, or rather to see things in a different light. Milne was waiting for me outside the hotel, and said Yakûb esh Shellaby had just been to call on me, and had been talking with him. We went out to see whether he was there, when Mr. Norris came up. He had been speaking with Nubar Pasha, or rather Nubar Pasha had been speaking with him about me after I had left, and seemed, he said, to be much interested in my expedition. He added, I must not take "No" for an answer, and hinted, rather significantly, that I should try *higher up*, meaning of course that I should get General Stanton to interest himself for me. So it comes to this, that the Consul-General is my only card, and without him I lose my game.

When the time came we went to church, ser-

vice being held in a room at the New Hotel. We met Mr. Rogers outside, with whom I stood talking for a few minutes before service began. As we came out, General Stanton, who had sat on the opposite side to me, preceded me by a few paces. I saw him hang back till I came out, when he crossed over and came to me holding out his hand, and then of his own accord introduced me to Mrs. Stanton—forgetting, I suppose, that you and I had had the pleasure of visiting Mrs. Stanton when we were in Egypt in 1866. Of course there was no time for conversation, but I managed to introduce Mr. Milne to them, and so we parted. We got back to our hotel in time for luncheon, on my coming out from which Mr. Frank Dillon's card was brought to me. He was waiting outside, and I went to him, and we had a long friendly talk: he asked after you very kindly. Milne had been commissioned by Mr. Waller, the American artist with whom we were on board the "Simla," and who is staying in our hotel, to ask me to come and see his pictures, so I took Dillon with me and introduced him. He is stopping at the Hotel du Nil, where I have promised to go and see him. Then Mr. John Cook, who is also staying at this hotel, stopped me, and politely offered to

take charge of anything for England. I arranged to go and see him to-morrow.

Things do not look so bright as they did yesterday, but I am not at all discouraged. I have now broken the ice. I have the *entrée* to Nubar Pasha, and can now ask General Stanton to say a word in my favour. If I had asked *him* to introduce me to the Minister, he might have made difficulties. I shall be hearing from you to-morrow or the next day, and I trust I may have good news from you. At half-past six, for seven, Milne and I dined with Mr. and Mrs. Rogers. There were present only the artist, Carl Haag, who has been up the Nile with Rogers, a Madame Büchner, and Yakûb esh Shellaby. We passed a very pleasant evening, leaving at eleven o'clock. Mrs. Rogers is a very nice little woman, a good deal like your friend (?) Commissary Furse's wife in manner and figure, if not exactly in face, only, if anything, shorter and stouter: if she goes on, she will soon equal Mrs. Robinson of Mauritius. We had the orthodox roast Turkey, and plum-pudding and mince pies, with plenty of champagne. In the evening two or three French (or foreign) ladies joined the party, and a Russian artist, who played to us several times on the piano very nicely indeed.

Altogether, we passed a very pleasant Christmas. [Unhappily the last Dr. Beke lived to spend.] Our only regret was, that you were not with me as at Damascus. I invited myself to dine with Rogers this day twelve years again!

December 26.—I got up this morning none the worse for my holiday-making. At ten o'clock I went to the Consulate and had a quiet talk with Mr. Rogers. Of course *he* can do nothing, and I explained at starting that I did not speak to him as Consul, but as an old friend, whose advice I am in need of. He seemed to think that General Stanton might perhaps be induced to interfere on my behalf, and he gave me a valuable hint. The Viceroy has several steam-tugs in the Suez Canal, one of which might be big enough for my purpose, as they are in the habit of carrying passengers; so that if the Viceroy should object to give me a big steamer, he might at all events let me have one of these little ones. As he said it was now a good time to see General Stanton, I went from the Consulate direct to his house, which is close by on the other side of the Esbekiah. And here begins act the second of my historical drama! General Stanton received me in a more than courteous manner. He was writing a letter,

which he asked my permission to finish, offering me a cigar meanwhile; and when he had sent that off, he began talking of my expedition in the most friendly manner. He had read my pamphlet halfway through in the train from Alexandria, and as far as he had gone he thought my reasons were most cogent. We discussed the matter for some little time, looking at the map, and I pointing out the site of Mount Sinai; and then I proceeded to the object of my visit. I had hardly explained what I wanted, when he said that he thought the Viceroy ought and *would* give me a steamer, and *volunteered* to speak to His Highness, and also to Nubar Pasha, to that effect. The Viceroy, he said, would be doing a great service to science; and besides, his sending a steamer to Akaba would give him an opportunity *of showing his flag there,* which he might not dislike to avail himself of. Akaba, General Staunton says, belongs to Egypt.[1] I doubt it. But whether or not, it is just on the Turkish frontier, and the Viceroy might be glad of such *an excuse* for going there and exercising a little bit of authority under the guise of rendering assistance to a distinguished

[1] In the adjustment of the Eastern Question about to be discussed at the approaching Congress, this question will be an important one to decide.

English traveller. The Sultan would have no pretence for finding fault with him for doing so. Is not all this good? For my part I felt inclined to throw up my hat for joy; but of course I confined myself to thanking General Stanton for his very great kindness. In mentioning to him that Mr. Poulett Scrope was one of the kind patrons of my expedition, he said he knew him well, but thought he was dead. He was the colleague, as member of Parliament for Stroud, with General Stanton's father. After this we talked politics, and being both Conservatives, we pulled well together in this respect likewise. Then I broached the Libyan Desert scheme, and showed him on the map of Africa the political, climatic, and humanitarian advantages of it. From his manner, I more than suspect the Khédive has a political object in Dr. Rohlfs's expedition,[1] and would be glad to have *other* motives suggested for justifying it to the world. The General is to see Nubar Pasha to-day, and may then perhaps mention the subject of my expedition. He must, of course, speak to him before addressing himself to the Khédive.

After luncheon Milne and I called on Mrs. Rogers, and then I went alone to pay my respects to Mrs. Stanton. She received me very kindly,

[1] Dr. Gerhard Rohlfs is now organising a fresh expedition.

and asked particularly after you, and was very sorry to hear you had become such an invalid. I had a long talk with her about my affair, in which she seemed much interested, but she said she feared I should meet with much opposition on account of the novelty of my views. When I came back to the hotel, I saw a dragoman recommended by Yakûb, and afterwards Cook's (the tourist's) manager, Alexander Howard, a Syrian. Then I came to my room to write to you. The mail is in from Brindisi, and I hope to hear from you.

December 27.—Yesterday afternoon, after I had finished my letter of the 23d to the 26th, which accompanies this, I received your dear letter of the 18th, and regret exceedingly to hear such bad accounts of your health. Pray do not delay a moment consulting a doctor: I trust to hear you have done so when you next write, and that you will be able to give me a more favourable report, for I am most anxious on the subject. You really must keep well while I am away. If all goes right, as I now hope, it will not be long before I am back with you. What you tell me about Hickie & Co. is most vexing: I shall write to Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co. on the subject. Apart from the extra expenses which I shall try to avoid, I hardly think

there will be very much delay, and as it is only the case of instruments that has gone to Liverpool, why that does not very much signify, as I shall not want them till I start on my journey. *Your* case I shall be glad to receive as quickly as possible. Mr. M.'s conduct, with respect to my article, is really too bad. The fact is, he has *no faith* in my discovery, or in the success of my expedition; but, *inshallah*, we will teach him better yet. I am sorry indeed to hear you have been so unsuccessful with respect to subscriptions for my expedition. I fear with you that you will not get anything more now: I must see whether I cannot meet with some more friends here like Colonel Morrieson. I had last night a long conversation with the Mr. Norris about whom I wrote to you in my last letter, and who seems greatly interested in my expedition. He looked into my pamphlet whilst with Nubar Pasha, and wished he could read it through, so I lent him a copy, which he took forthwith to his room to read. I shall have to tell you more about him by and by. What you say in your letter about the Khédive having an *excuse* for going to Akaba,[1] &c., is exactly what General Stanton said; so this shows what a clever little

[1] See Beke's "French and English in the Red Sea." Second Edition, 1862. Taylor & Francis.

woman you are. Let me first get the steamer, and then *of course* I shall ask for a firman addressed to the Governor of Akaba, ordering him to provide me with whatever is necessary.

And now about myself. I am quite well, and my leg is going on quite well too. It has been raining on and off all the night; this is a novelty in Cairo, where it used *never* to rain: the cultivation *and the trees* are the cause of it. Mr. Norris says that in 1850 there were two and a half millions of acres under cultivation, and now there are five millions! He is an American settled in Paris, and, if I am to believe all he tells me, he is an agent of the French Government, or at all events *was* so at the time of the investment of Paris, when he says he was sent on a mission to the several Powers of Europe having a credit of seven millions of francs. I fancy this is rather "tall" talk; but at all events, he seems to be on intimate terms with the Khédive and his Ministers. We had a good deal of conversation about my expedition and myself. He said that Nubar Pasha was favourably disposed towards me, *only* he could not encourage the Khédive in patronising enterprises like mine that are constantly being brought before him. The Khédive is overhead and ears in debt; money is

getting scarcer every day, and a stop must be made to all unnecessary expenditure. So, enterprises like mine are not to be encouraged, and the Khédive is to squander two or three millions on the marriage of his daughters, as he did last year, and is likely to do again this year. He is, however, a very kind man, and if I were introduced to him, and he were in the humour, he would grant me all I requested. Mr. Norris recommended that I should get General Stanton to introduce me, or to speak to him for me. And as he questioned, I said I had seen, and spoken to him on the subject. Norris was anxious to know what he had said, but I only told him that the General had expressed himself not unfavourably, but of course with persons in his position it was necessary to be diplomatic, and speak in general terms, which led to a long talk about diplomacy and his (Norris's) experience, &c. If he was fishing, he did not catch much. I shall see him again when he has read my pamphlet. I asked him to allow me to pay my respects to Madame, who has come to Egypt for her health. They are lodging in this hotel, where they have been since October. I hear that the Duke of Sutherland and Mr. Pender are coming here next month. They built the house in which

the Consul-General is living, and which he rents of them. This is a little speculation of theirs. The Khédive *gave* them the land, and asked them to build. He is altering the Frank quarter entirely. Shepheard's Hotel is no longer on the Esbekiah. I assure you, you would not know the place. I shall now close my letter and put it in the box so that it may go by the twelve o'clock mail to Alexandria. We are not always sure here about the departure from Alexandria, as it depends on the arrival of the India mail at Suez, whence it goes through direct, without passing through Cairo. The English post-office in this city is now abolished, and our letters have to be sent through the Egyptian post-office. I do not mean to write to the "Athenæum" again till I hear what the editor has done with my letter from Alexandria. It is not raining now, but it is miserably cold, and the streets are filthily dirty. I have written to Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co., and hope to have the case of books, at all events, in a day or two; but it may be a week or more before I get the case of instruments.

December 28.—After I had posted my letter to you yesterday, the rain still continued, with hail. Signor Battisti, who came in from Alexandria in the evening, said they had had hailstones there as

big as the end of one's finger! Of course there was no stirring out of the house. I was glad he came in, so that I might have a chat with him *over the fire*, round which all the visitors in the house crowded after dinner and remained till bedtime. There was no performance at the Opera on account of the weather! To-day it is fine, but the streets are full of mud almost over one's ankles. I went out, nevertheless, before church to see Mr. Beyerlé and Mr. Jacques Oppenheim: the former said that Nubar Pasha would be willing to assist me were it not for the expense, which, he says, would be £2000 at least! I recurred to my conversation about my scheme for flooding the Libyan Desert as a means of abolishing the slave trade, &c. At first he shrugged his shoulders, but afterwards listened more attentively, though he said that the Viceroy had no money for such schemes. I replied that I did not propose he should spend money, for that I thought the English philanthropists would back such an enterprise; and I suggested that he should mention it to the Khédive. He laughed and said that His Highness and he *were at war*—they did not even speak! We know what the end of this will be. When the Khédive gets over his displeasure, because they

have not been willing or able to supply him with all the money he wants, they will be better friends than ever. I explained that I did not put this forward as a scheme from which I wished to derive any personal advantage: what I did was purely in the cause of humanity, and in the interest (as I fully believed) of His Highness. I shall see De Lesseps about it, and also about the Suez Canal steamers: I think I shall at all events be able to get one of these. Mr. Beyerlé promised he would still try to move Nubar Pasha; but that General Stanton could hardly fail of success if he really took the matter up. He and his partner had intended calling on me yesterday but for the weather, and the latter said it was their purpose to do so to-day, but I begged them not to trouble as I was going to church. I suppose I shall see them to-morrow. General Stanton was not at church, so I presume he was busy with the mail, which did not leave till after two P.M. Letters at the post-office were in time till noon. I posted mine yesterday, because I was told it was safer to do so, on account of the freaks the Post-Office Company play when the steamers are behind time. I could still have posted another letter had there been any necessity for it.

The Consul was at church, but he came in late, having had to go to the Khédive. The Consul-General will be going there too, as he must pay his respects after his long absence. I have been fortunate in pushing on to Cairo at the very moment they both arrived here. I omitted to mention that yesterday afternoon I called on Mrs. Norris, as I had requested permission to do when I lent Norris my pamphlet. He was not in, so I had to introduce myself, which I had no difficulty in doing, as we were already on bowing terms from meeting so frequently.

After church I went to look De Lesseps up. I was told he was at the New Hotel, and there they sent me to the Hotel Royal, whence I was forwarded to the Hotel d'Orient, the hotel at which he had really been, but is no longer, he having gone to Ismailia (pronounced Ismaileēyah) three or four days ago. He is expected back in a week or ten days; I think, however, of running over to Ismailia to see him. I will jot down some notes here which I made on my journey from Alexandria.

The country is so changed since I first knew it, that it does not seem the same: it is well cultivated, and looks most rich and flourishing, being

well watered from canals and ditches. I observed a rude way of passing the water from one ditch to another; two men held the ends of a cord, in the middle of which was a basket, which they swung backwards and forwards, and so *scooped* the water out. Many of the villages were much improved, and there were signs of houses for the labourers, approaching more to a European type than the mud huts in which they have hitherto lived. Some of the native villages seemed deserted, and the huts falling into decay. When the Israelites built the cities for Pharaoh of mud, bricks, and straw, I should like to know *how long* they could have lasted, and what traces we are likely to find of them. There was, I am told, an exodus of *fellahs* in the time of Mohammed Ali, in consequence of his oppression, which was the primary cause of the Syrian war. I must see to this.

The reason of the rains which now visit this country so much more than formerly appears to be the greater cultivation, and also the planting of trees, which not only line the road, but are in parts so plentiful as to give it almost the appearance in places of being well wooded: it certainly does not look like Egypt. In the villages far and near one sees the tall chimneys of factories, which tend to

increase the illusion, though the mixture with them of the native mud huts soon destroys the charm. Ophthalmia, the great curse of the country, is certainly on the decrease, being not only less frequent, but also in a milder form. The railway, above all, is a great civiliser, from its opening up the country, facilitating the transport of its produce, and bringing the people of one part into communication with those of another. We had a delightful ride from Alexandria to Cairo, having the carriage entirely to ourselves during the greater part of the time, and the weather being delightfully cool and pleasant. The cotton harvest is just over, and the people are busy clearing and ploughing the land, an animated and lively scene. In one place we saw a *camel* drawing the plough! In others, the cattle were taking their fill of the rich pasture, which they seemed to have possession of *ad libitum*. Of course there is a dark side—perhaps many dark sides—to the picture, but, looking on the surface only, there is an appearance of great material prosperity, and the balance must certainly be of good.

Yonis Ibrahim, a dragoman, recommended to me by Yakub esh Shellaby, has been with me to-day to let me know his terms. He has the modesty to talk of £8 per day, for one month, that is, £248. I

only wish he may get it, or rather, I wish I had it to give—and then I would not. I told him so; when he proposed that I should take the expenses on myself, and pay him only for his personal services. I asked him how much he expected, when he hinted at his having been paid £25 a month by the Egyptian Government, for accompanying some of the railway surveyors in Upper Egypt. Clearly this gentleman is too high-priced for me; but he is a respectable and intelligent man, has been several times to Akaba, Petra, Ma'an, &c., and I have no doubt would do his work well.

December 29.—This morning, I went to the French Consulate to inquire after M. de Lesseps. He is on the Suez Canal somewhere, and is expected back in a few days. I thought, and still think, of writing to him, appointing to see him at Ismailia; but on inquiry, I find the journey would occupy a whole day and the return another, costing a pound sterling each way, and a third day would be occupied with him. This would involve the hotel bill for two nights, in addition to the expenses of my room here at Cairo, so that I question whether it would be prudent to chance the journey. I will write to him, however, to know when he may be expected here.

This morning I have been to Boulak to see the Egyptian Museum, and also to have a talk with Mariette Bey, the Director, as you know. I looked over the Museum, but did not succeed in finding M. Mariette, as he was absent with the Viceroy, and the people in charge did not know when he would be back. The principal object of my curiosity was the group Mariette discovered at San (the Zoan of Scripture) of the remains of my Mitzrites—his Hyksos—who were evidently allied to the Philistines, and worshipped the same *fish*-god, Dagon. They are very interesting and important, confirming, as they do, my identification of the position of Mitzraim. I was accompanied by Mr. Milne, who had, however, found his way thither a day or two ago, before the rain. He is extremely well informed on other subjects besides geology, having been educated at King's College, London, besides acquiring mechanical knowledge in Lancashire, of which county he is a native. He is rather backward, so that he does not make the most of *himself*, like somebody else I know, so that he requires drawing out: but I find his company very useful to me, and, in talking over matters, I obtain many a valuable hint from him. He has now gone off with his hammer to look at the mountains near here,

which, however, I expect he will find to be further off than he calculates on; but he has good legs, and knows how to use them. He also knows how to talk, and is gradually disseminating my views among the people in the hotel, with whom he mixes more than I do. I, too, do my best to be sociable. Fancy an American telling him that he looked on me as a long-headed, matter-of-fact Yorkshireman!

I meet several persons who claim acquaintance with me. One is Dr. Grant, an American physician, who says he lodged with us at Williams's, in the Shoubra road, in 1865; another is Mr. Gibbs, the Director of the telegraph, who tells me that the P. and O.'s Southampton steamer has been forced by the weather to proceed direct to Port Said, without putting in at Alexandria to land mails and passengers, and my box of books, &c., which will have to be landed at Ismailia, or it may be at Suez. This is annoying, though, under the circumstances, the delay is not so important as it might have been. It is strange that I have not fallen in with my friend Colonel Morrieson: he came on to Cairo the day before me, and I certainly understood he would be at the New Hotel, but he is not there. In the afternoon I wrote to M. de Lesseps, asking

him when he would be in Cairo, and when I could see him after his arrival.

After dinner Milne and I went and paid a visit to Mr. Frank Dillon at the Hotel du Nil. He asked particularly after you, and hoped to see you and me at his studio at Kensington after his and my return to England. He gave me a photograph of an *interior* of a "native" house which I shall bring home to you. There is a story attached to it, which I need not tell you now.[1] Milne had been out, but did not get as far as the mountains, having been stopped by the cemetery of ancient Cairo which they have been cutting through, exposing thousands of human skulls and bones. Dillon will go there to see them. I suggest that it would make a fine sketch of the "valley of the shadow of death."

December 30. — Last night I looked through Mariette Bey's "History of Egypt," a little work of which I bought a copy yesterday at the Museum. To my great gratification I find he substantially agrees with me as to the fact, that the Israelites were not in bondage under the Egyptians, but under the Hyksos, or *Shepherd* Kings, who were of a different race. Thus I am right in saying that

[1] The story was, that the room fitted up in such a thoroughly oriental style, is Mr. Dillon's own room at South Kensington!

every shepherd was not an "abomination," as our English (and every other) version has it, but of a separate and *respected* class. I must see Mariette, and so I have sent a note to him this morning requesting an interview. He stands well with the Khédive, and may be able to help me with him. I have heard nothing yet from General Stanton. I trust that no news is good news. Having received an answer from Mariette Bey that he was mostly visible in the afternoon, I took a carriage after lunch to Boulak, but he had not come back from Abdin, where he was with the Khédive: but I was told I could see him at eight o'clock to-morrow morning. Milne has been out into the country with Mr. Waller, the American artist, and has brought home a very pretty sketch he has made. He, like me, is most anxious to be off and at work, as he wants to get back to England for his Newfoundland engagement in the spring.

Just as I came back from Boulak, the Khédive's mother passed in a carriage and four, with her ladies in waiting following in two other carriages and pairs, with syces and outriders carrying gold and silver sticks, and followed by a number of attendants, quite a state affair. My coachman had to stop his horses while she passed. Just before

dinner I was standing in the Hall, when General Stanton and Mr. Rogers called for Mr. Vivian and Mr. Elliott, who are staying at this hotel. The General had just time to say to me that he had seen Nubar Pasha, who had promised to speak to the Viceroy, though he did not expect much good from it. He had intended to call on me to tell me, but had not had time. This is not very encouraging. In fact, I fear I shall not succeed. What I shall do if the Viceroy refuses I really do not know.

Selim, the son of our old dragoman, Mikhail Hené, has been offering his services as dragoman. He asks £7 per diem, and says it will take fifteen days to Akaba alone! What am I to do? I am quite bewildered. My only chance seems to be a *small* boat. Meanwhile time runs on, and I am dipping deeper and deeper into my scanty purse.

December 31.—This morning I was up before seven, had my breakfast in my room, and was off to Mariette Bey. A lovely morning, but the fog so thick that one could not see fifty yards before one; the sun, however, soon cleared it off. Mariette received me very kindly, and we had a long talk together. We are quite of one opinion as to the Israelites and Shepherd Kings. My connecting the

latter with the Philistines by means of the fish-god, Dagon, was something new to him, and he said he would immediately make *une petite étude là dessus.* As to my expedition, he thought the Viceroy might give me a vessel—he has two in the Red Sea—but it depends entirely on Nubar Pasha. They are making great "economies," he knows, which may stand in the way, but he thinks it might be done. He recommends me to speak to General Stone, an American officer, who is Acting Minister of Public Works. I will get Mr. Norris to introduce me. I spoke to Mariette about inundating the Libyan Desert. He says that the French are actually at work on the subject of inundating the Sahara, behind Algiers, by means of the Lesser Syrtis. It is by the Greater Syrtis, or Gulf of Sidra, that I propose inundating the Libyan Desert.

Whilst I was writing this a gentleman was announced, and on my requesting him to come up to my room, I found him to be Dr. Schweinfurth, a nice young man, much younger than I had any idea of, for although I believe I have met him before I had forgotten what he was like. He is on his way to the Oasis of Khargeh, or Great Oasis, and will start the day after to-morrow. He is lodging at the Hotel du Nil; and hearing of my being

here, he came to pay his respects to me. We had a long and most interesting conversation on a variety of subjects connected with his journey and mine; discussing Baker, Speke, Lepsius, Miani—the last-named is just dead, having gone as far as Schweinfurth himself. One curious fact he told me is that the people of Upper Egypt confound Lepsius with the Persian King Cambyses, who lived three or four hundred years B.C.! Cambyses, it is well known, destroyed the statue of Memnon and other ancient monuments. Lepsius, it is also well known, defaced many of the monuments by taking away the inscriptions for the Berlin Museum some thirty years ago. In the minds of the ignorant *fellahs* the two have got confused, so that Lepsius is reported to be the destroyer of the statue of Memnon! Such is "tradition." Therefore we may well understand how the people of Harran have adopted *our* "Rebekah's Well," and made it that of "Abraham." Schweinfurth says that the Viceroy rendered him *no* assistance, so far as money is concerned: all his support was moral: he ordered the natives to assist him—that is all. To Rohlfs's expedition his assistance is limited to £4000. Sir Samuel Baker's Expedition has cost the Viceroy half-a-million sterling and seven hundred lives, to no pur-

pose, or rather, it has done harm that it will take long to remedy, if ever! Instead of putting an end to slavery, it has put an end to legitimate commerce. And as regards science and geographical discovery, he has done absolutely nothing. I gave Schweinfurth a copy of my pamphlet, and have now only one left. The letters by the Southampton steamer arrived here last night from Suez, so that I shall be hearing about my things soon, I hope.

This morning Selim has been speaking to me again. He asks ten francs per day for himself, I finding everything. This would make three hundred francs per month, or £12. Yonis talked of £25! There is a Mr. Walter M'Lellan, a manufacturer, or *engineer* more probably, of Glasgow, who is going up the Nile with his wife and daughter; I have made their acquaintance through Milne, who lent him his copy of my pamphlet to read. He could not then give it the attention he wished, so I thought I might as well present him with a copy from myself, with which he was much pleased. He is a friend of Livingstone's, who gave him a copy of his work on the last day of 1858, in return for which he and two friends made him a present of a little steam-engine, with flour-mill, and I know not

what besides. He seems much interested in my expedition, and may assist it perhaps.

After luncheon I called on General Stanton, to hear the particulars of his conversation with Nubar Pasha. The latter *promised* to speak to the Viceroy, but may *forget* to do so, in which case the General says he will take care to remind him, and he would speak to the Viceroy himself if ever he had an opportunity; but of course he could not go to him on purpose. He says he thinks he could and ought to do this for me. Stanton seems most well disposed, and I must hope he really is so. He says I am too early, and that I ought to wait till the middle or end of February. But how could I do this, especially as I want to be at Akaba at the Pascal full moon? When I went in he presented me with an invitation to dinner to-morrow, New-Year's Day, which he was just going to send out to me. Of course I accepted it with thanks. While with him, Mr. J Oppenheim came in: he had just been to call on me, and I found his card on my return.

Milne is hard at work grubbing in the cemetery and the mountains beyond. Thank God that amidst all my troubles I keep my health. During the rain I felt a little rheumatic, and no wonder;

but now I am all right again, and so nimble that I can run down the marble stairs without holding on. I don't *run* very fast. What I mean to say is, that I go down step after step like *any other* young man! When I go out Mr. Milne is always very careful to give me his arm, which I found especially of use when I came home at night from Frank Dillon's.

This afternoon I have received a letter from Mr. M——, *via* Southampton, dated the 16th, apologising for not inserting my article, as he had *already* stated my views! As regards the article on New's work, he inserts the part I asked him to omit because it is "too good to be left out," and then he leaves out all about myself, "lest he should suspect the authorship." Very kind of him. He concludes by saying, "When you get into the wilds send us some letters, and oblige yours faithfully." I feel inclined to say, "I'll see you hanged first," but I suppose I must not quarrel with my bread and butter. I shall see what your next letter says. The "Atlantic" is due to-morrow; so, after all, no time will have been lost with the instruments. Yakûb esh Shellaby wants to know where Lord Francis Conyngham is, as he wishes to write to him. I will see if I can find out for him. To-day my pension is due. To-morrow I will get Mr. Rogers's

certificate. The receipt for the Paymaster-General is already made out; but I think I must not send it to you, as I hope to *want* the money before I could hear from you; and after all the loss will apparently not be greater than on circular notes, on which I hear it is two per cent. I ought to have brought all my money in gold napoleons, which go for sixteen shillings sterling, without loss. *Pazienza!* General S., they say, is not liked, and will soon have a fall in spite of the favour in which he now stands. I hear that these are the sentiments of the Americans, of whom there are many in the Viceroy's service, as well as of the native employés. I must feel my ground before wishing to speak to him, as from the character given of him, he may perhaps do me no good.

10.30 P.M.—I have been reading in my room Mariette Bey's "History of Egypt;" and now, before going to bed for the last night this year, I open my desk, and sit down to wish you a happy New Year, and pray that God may bless us both, and make us more happy and prosperous than during the year that is now ending. I am very miserable just now, but I trust in God to mend my condition. To His care I commend us both. Again and again God bless you!

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR JOURNEY TO AKABA—RECEPTION BY THE KHÉDIVE—HIS HIGHNESS GRANTS DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO ARABIA THE ASSISTANCE OF A STEAMER.

January 1, 1874.—A happy New Year to you, my darling Milly. My best wishes to all at home. I saw a little white dog in the *sûk* at Boulak yesterday which looked something like our Prinny. About ten o'clock I called on Consul Rogers on business, and afterwards went to the New Hotel, with the intention of attending divine service; but there seemed to be none. However, on looking on the board, I found Colonel Morrieson to be in the hotel, so I went up to his room and had a long chat with him. Mr., Mrs., and Miss M'Lellan have left this afternoon for their *dahabieh* on the Nile, in which they intend remaining until they receive their letters from England. Mr. M'Lellan has invited me and also my companion to visit them to-morrow

afternoon. I say "Miss" M'Lellan; but I fancy she is married.

In the afternoon I remained at home, thinking over an article for the "Athenæum," which I began writing. I was stopped in my work by a visit from Colonel Eyre, one of the passengers by the 'Simla,' who is going up the Nile; and is waiting for his baggage which was to come to Alexandria, per 'Malwa,' but, like mine, it has gone on to Suez. I explained to him how the matter stood; and then we had a long talk about my expedition, which lasted till it was nearly time to dress for dinner. We dined at 7.30. The party consisted of M. Carl Haag, Mr. Clarke, the chaplain here, Captain French, Mr. Gordon, General Stanton's secretary, and another young man who appears to have been some time in Egypt, and myself. I took Mrs. Stanton in to dinner; which was served à la Russe, but was nothing very special. After Mrs. Stanton had withdrawn into the General's study—the only room having a fire *that will burn*—chibouques were brought in, and then we joined 'the lady.' The time was pretty well taken up in examining a rather large collection of Egyptian antiquities—small things—which General Stanton has been collecting from time to time. When we left I walked with Carl

Haag, with whom I had some conversation respecting myself, and the difficult position in which I find myself placed. I was led to this by a remark he made during dinner time, about what he had said to the Viceroy when he had called upon him a few days ago: and I bethought me that if *I* had come here and asked to be presented to the Viceroy simply as a distinguished traveller, which General Stanton could not have refused me, and *then* had broached the subject of my expedition, and asked the Viceroy himself for assistance, I should have been spared all the trouble I have had, and have had a better chance of success. This I explained to Haag, who saw the force of it. He suggested that I should ask the General to do so even now; and said that if he could do anything to help me, he would. This was very kind of him. He stands well with the principal people here, being a friend of the Prince of Wales, by whom, I believe, he was introduced. He and Mr. Vivian, Mr. Elliott, and Mr. Rogers, have just been up the Nile in the Viceroy's private yacht with His Highness's personal attendants, &c. The Brindisi mail arrived at Alexandria to-day, and while we were at table, the Consul-General's despatch box was brought in.

This morning I received a note from Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co. of Alexandria, saying that my case of books is not in the manifest of the 'Malwa,' nor yet of the following Southampton steamer 'Cathay,' which had just arrived. I have written to them in reply, that as "passenger's baggage" it would not be entered on the manifest. At luncheon I met Milne, whom I had not seen for twenty-four hours! He was off yesterday afternoon fossilizing, and when he came back to dinner, I was occupied with Colonel Eyre. This morning he was up and away again before I rose. He is off again somewhere this afternoon, so that we now see little of one another.

About 4.30 P.M., as I had just finished my article for the "Athenæum," I was favoured with a visit from Miss M'Lellan, who very kindly came to say her father was waiting to take me on board his *dahabieh* to dine. They have a splendid boat, with eight sleeping-berths, and saloon handsomely furnished with sofas on the deck, an awning and side-curtains, forming a large room. They club with another family of three persons, and Mr. M'Lellan calculates that the trip of the two months will cost them £400, or £200 for each party. How you would like such a trip! They

have their lady's-maid, with dragoman, native servant, and cook; and the crew consists of captain and mate, ten men, and a boy. We had a very decent dinner, and the crew amused (?) us by singing, accompanied by the tambourine: so that altogether I passed a very pleasant evening. Milne was invited also, but through some misunderstanding he did not come till after dinner. I had a carriage home, which cost four shillings. Both Mr. M'Lellan and his wife gave you and me a most pressing invitation to visit them at Glasgow in the course of next autumn. When I returned to the hotel I fully expected to find letters from you, but there were none. I feel sure that you have written, and conclude, therefore, that Tods of Alexandria delayed a post in sending them on.

January 3.—Finding no letters from you when I went downstairs to breakfast at 8.30, as soon as I had finished I took a donkey-boy and went off to Moski to inquire. I there found Mr. W. sorting the letters received last night, one of them being for me, which he was on the point of sending off. It was yours of Christmas-day, from which I am rejoiced to see that you are *better*. What you tell me of there being no further subscriptions to my expedition is very discouraging. I really do not

know what to do. I hurried off from England as I did, because I feared to be accused of wasting money and time that ought to be applied to another purpose. I am, however, far worse off here, for I am spending five times as much as I should have done in England had I stayed to complete the collection of the necessary funds; and still there is nothing to show for it. God help me! I am almost in despair! From Tod & Co.'s I went to the Bank of Egypt on business.

It is said that the Khédive talks of a railway to Khartum, and even beyond, to which I see no objection. I spoke about flooding the Libyan Desert, which struck them much, and they recommended me to see the Khédive, who would be sure to receive me well. I am surprised I have not heard from De Lesseps; I suppose he is away from Ismailia. On my way back home I called on Mr. J. Oppenheim. He asked me how I progressed, and I told him. I spoke of my desire to see the Viceroy, and asked if *they* could manage it; but he said no one could do it but General Stanton, who could not object to present me as an English traveller of distinction; only I must of course avoid speaking of my expedition in the first instance. The General might object on this ground, but hardly

if I promised not to broach the subject. I feel the difficulty of my position; but I must not leave a stone unturned. Through Nubar Pasha I expect nothing, though he might be disposed to help me if he saw the Khédive well disposed towards me. Mr. M'Lellan called at luncheon time at the hotel with his daughter to inquire for letters, and to take leave. We met in the hall, shook hands, and had a few words of ordinary conversation, and then said farewell.

January 5.—Ease your mind about the two cases. I have just received from Messrs. Tod and Co. a letter from Messrs. Hickie, enclosing the key of the box you sent them, which *fortunately* they did not send by the 'Malwa,' but by the following week's steamer, the 'Cathay.' The bill of lading of the box, per 'Atlantic,' is also enclosed, so that there is now no difficulty in my going on in this respect. Since I wrote to you on Saturday I have been thinking seriously over my position, and have come to the conclusion that I must *go forward immediately*, let the consequences be what they may. If, therefore, there is not a prospect of the Khédive giving me a steamer *at once* to perform the voyage up the Gulf of Akaba, which I so much desire, I have decided on going on to Suez, and chartering a native boat, or buggalah. I

know what they are, as I came on in one from Djeddah to Suez in 1843. On Saturday I wrote to Mr. West inquiring about the Peninsula and Oriental Company's Steamer "Timsah," and also about a buggalah.

I am now going to Messrs. Oppenheim and to General Stanton to tell them my determination. Through the latter I shall at all events be able to obtain a firman ordering the *Mutsellim* (or Governor) of Kalaat-el-Akaba to help me. I cannot now tell you the result, as I must post this letter before I go out, or I shall be too late for the Marseilles mail. But I have thought it better to write to you about the cases, so as to prevent you from giving yourself any further anxiety on account of this, and also to *ease* your mind a little about myself. All will be for the best; I trust in God. As for myself I have confidence in the knowledge that I am acting for the best under the circumstances in which I am placed. Mr. Milne is going on well. I find him a much better artist than I had any idea of; for he has painted some very pretty views of Cairo. He is getting a little nervous about the delay, as he wants to be back in England by the end of February or so. You know our agreement, or understanding, was, that I should not

require his services for more than three months, and one month has already expired!

January 5.—The few lines I wrote to you this morning, *via* Marseilles, will have prepared you for what I have now to communicate. As soon as I had posted my letter I went to Oppenheim's, and saw Mr. Beyerlé and Mr. Jacques Oppenheim; the former, before I could say anything to him, volunteered the advice that I should not wait in expectation of the Viceroy's agreeing to my request; but that I should act independently. I told him this was what I intended to do, and that I had come to speak to him about a firman to the Mutsellim of Akaba. He said that I must apply for it through General Stanton; but that he would back it with Nubar Pasha. I then went straight to General Stanton, but he was not in, so I directed my steps to the Consulate, where I had a long talk with my friend Rogers. He said that he could obtain for me a letter from the Governor of Cairo, and he would also give me one to him, as he has been in correspondence with him, though he does not know him personally. But when I said I wanted a firman, he replied that this I could only obtain through the Consul-General. So everything is centred in this one man.

However, not disheartened, I went in the afternoon to General Stanton, who immediately said he would introduce me to Nubar Pasha, and *at once*, if I pleased. Whereupon he kindly sent off to the Minister's to know whether he was in his divan —at the Foreign Office; and learning in the affirmative, he at once took me off with him. Nubar Pasha received me most courteously. When the General asked if he had anything to say about the steamer, he shook his head; but on his telling him that I had decided on going to Akaba in a native boat, and wanted a firman to the Governor of Akaba, he immediately replied he should be happy to do everything in his power for me, and would take the necessary steps immediately. General Stanton had previously said to me that he thought the firman should be directed to the Sheikh of Akaba, who has the furnishing of camels, &c., to travellers going to Petra, but to this I objected, saying that I imagined the Governor would be the best. The Consul-General said that I must not expect the Government to order him to supply me with camels, or other animals, or, in fact, to do anything *at their expense;* but this, I said, I wished them to do; and on our way to Nubar Pasha's, I had explained to him how I was circumstanced as to the limited

funds at my disposal for the expedition. He seemed to have forgotten that my journey was at the expense of others; but recollected all about it when I reminded him of it.

When we spoke to Nubar Pasha, the General asked who was the proper person to whom the firman should be addressed, and the Minister seemed to think it was the Mutsellim; but he did not know anything positive on the subject, or what the position of that officer is, or the strength of the detachment under his command. However, he promised he would see that everything proper was done. I had spoken to the General about the Khédive, and requested him, whilst Nubar Pasha was speaking to some one else, to ask His Excellency to present me; but he replied, that I had better do this myself. So as soon as Nubar was disengaged, I did so, explaining my object, which was to speak about the Libyan Desert, and promising that I would not broach the subject of my own expedition. His Excellency seemed to take this in good part, and said he thought the Viceroy would be glad to see me. So he is to speak to His Highness and let me know. On this I took my leave.

I know that you will be disappointed, as I am myself: but what is to be done otherwise? I must

move. Every day I stay here I am diminishing the funds for the journey; and to wait for a favourable answer from the Khédive would be simply madness. Return I cannot, without having done what I came to do. As long as I was waiting for my instruments and books to arrive out, I could make an excuse to myself for waiting for the Viceroy's answer; but now that this excuse no longer exists, I am compelled to look *the naked truth* in the face. And I cannot but admit that there is not the slightest prospect of success. Beyerlé said so of his own accord; and Nubar Pasha gave me so to understand this afternoon. He had not spoken to the Khédive, and he never intends to do so, inasmuch as he would, in his capacity of Minister, advise His Highness not to comply with my request. It only remains for me to act independently. The journey overland I cannot undertake: first, because I am not capable of it physically; secondly, because of the expense; and thirdly, because I want to make the voyage up the Gulf of Akaba. The sea trip will cost me very much less, and by economy and management, I flatter myself I shall be able to carry it into execution. I can bear the sea—like it, in fact. But there will be little of sea, for the boat will coast all the way, anchoring most pro-

bably all night, and taking good care not to leave if there is the slightest prospect of bad weather. I know them of old. If we are rather long on the voyage it cannot be helped. On every account, then, it is advisable we should start at once; and therefore, having now made up my mind, you may rely on it I shall expedite matters as much as possible.

While I think of it, you had better address your letters to me at the "Post Office, Suez." The postage, I think, is only 8d., as it is an *English* post-office. The postmaster, I am informed, is Mr. Levick's *son*.

January 6.—Yesterday, Yakûb esh Shellaby told me he knew an old and experienced dragoman who would take me "sheepa" than any one else, and better too. This morning I just went as far as the Consulate to see whether he was there. Whilst I was writing to you, Yakûb came in with a *whole bagful* of the certificates of Sáyid Ahmed Abu Nabut, *i.e.*, "Lord Ahmed, the man with a stick." He is a "nobleman," wearing a green turban, as being a descendant of the prophet, and therefore entitled to be called "Sáyid." I looked at a few of the certificates which are certainly first rate, and I have no doubt he is a good man, unless, like

me, he is too old for my hard work. However, I told Yakûb I must first see Mr. Rogers, and then I would talk about engaging him.

About eleven o'clock I went again to the Consulate and had a long friendly talk with Mr. Rogers, who promised he would give me letters to the Mutsellim, which might be of use to me. He then said that he had been seriously reflecting on what I had told him about my intended voyage by sea to Akaba, and he strongly recommended me not to undertake it. He said it was very hazardous, and besides, might be very tedious; as, if there were bad weather, I might remain an indefinite period at some out of the way place unable to proceed. Then, too, the expense might be increased immensely by the protracted voyage. He said much more to the same effect, and concluded with the strong recommendation that I should undertake the journey by land *on a good quiet horse or mule*, about which there could be no difficulty or uncertainty; the time being defined, and in all human calculation *certain*, and the expense being also defined and considerably less! All these considerations had suggested themselves to me; indeed, so hesitating had I become on the subject, that, whereas I had intended to write to Mr. West at Suez, asking him to enter

into treaty for a boat, I changed my mind, and put off doing so till to-morrow. I am glad I did, as I now see that the boat voyage will not do at all. But then the land journey! If you were with me, I imagine you would strongly object to my undertaking it. Nevertheless, I feel that I could do it safely, if not altogether comfortably, on a good horse or mule.

As I came out from the Consulate I met Yakûb, to whom I communicated the alteration in my plans. He, too, was strongly in favour of the land route. If you were here with me what would you recommend me to do? I cannot throw up the affair; and Milne, though a very clever fellow, and most useful assistant, is quite incompetent to go alone: so that if I do not go myself, the enterprise must be abandoned, and this I feel I cannot do. I am, thank God, in the enjoyment of better health than I have had for many years. I feel quite strong, and capable of enduring any *reasonable* fatigue, and, with God's help, I trust to get through the journey in health and safety.

After writing the foregoing, I went out and called on Cook's head dragoman, Alexander Howard, to ask him how many days it is to Akaba from Suez direct. He does not know; so he sent

out to inquire, and got (as is usually the case) various answers—one man saying it was only four days. All at once he called out to a man passing by "Nabut!" when an old man came in, whom I have often seen hanging about without knowing who he was. This was Yakûb esh Shellaby's "Abu Nabut." He appears to be an intelligent, sound, hale old man. I should hardly think he is more than sixty. He said the road is eight or nine days' *easy* travelling: and suggested that I might have a litter, or palanquin, hung between two camels, one before and one behind, which is not a bad idea, and I think would even be cheaper than buying a horse: it certainly would be easier for me. I must speak to Yakûb about it. So I wished them good evening.

There is one most remarkable thing Abu Nabut told us, namely, that *near Akaba* is a mountain called Djebel-en-Nûr (the mountain of light), on which, the Arabs say, God spoke to Moses! and, therefore, they stop and say their prayers there. I could not manage to extract from him its precise position. There is always so much indefiniteness and confusion with their "rights" and "lefts," behind and before, that one never can make anything out of what they say; and Howard made it worse

by pretending to know what in fact he knew nothing about. I must try and get at the root of the matter through Yakûb. I should not be surprised at being told that my discovery of Mount Sinai, like that of Harran, is nothing new, for that the natives knew all about it long before me! It is very singular, nevertheless. Milne has just come in from the petrified forest, where he has been all day. I told him of my change of plans, when he simply asked, when we should start? That Djebel-en-*Nūr* sticks in my gizzard. Mind it is not "*Nor*," which means "*fire*," but "*Nūr*," "light.'

January 7.—I got up very hoarse, but a cup of warm coffee and going out in the sun improved it a good deal, and I have no doubt I shall soon be all right again. To-day has been a busy day. I first went to Mr. Beyerlé, who has been away on a shooting expedition with Sheriff Pasha. We talked of the progress I was making with Nubar Pasha, and he said he thought the firman would obtain for me every assistance in the power of the Mutsellim to give; but he did not think this would be much. We spoke about the Viceroy and the steamer. He said candidly that he had hoped to get it for me, and had not matters changed, and looked so bad lately, he might have counted

on succeeding. But it is not so, and that is enough.

I have omitted to say that when I got up this morning I found at my door a letter from Mr. West, saying that the "Timsah" would cost £120 per day, or perhaps £150, even supposing I could have it, which I could not, without authority from London. The Khédive's boats are all engaged with pilgrims, except one which has been ordered to Massowah, and which I think I might have had, had General Stanton pressed it. But it is of no use complaining. A native boat Mr. West does not consider "prudent" or "expeditious" at this time of year. On this point we are *d'àccord:* so there is an end of Suez.

I now went to talk with Yakûb. On my way I was accosted by another dragoman, Mohammed Abu something, who asked me five pounds, and then came down to four pounds per diem; I paying extra for the *takhterawân*, or palanquin, that is to say, buying it myself, and also paying for an extra camel to carry it. I said I would think it over. He did not know the country, however, though he said he had been once to Akaba, but no further. With Yakûb and also with Mr. Rogers I had a long talk about Abu

Nabut; inquired about his character through the Chancellier of the Consulate, and after a great deal of talk I agreed to give him five pounds per day for twenty-five days *from Cairo*, or £125; with five pounds for each day extra. This to include *takhterawân*, and everything; half the amount to be paid down, and the remainder on our return to Cairo. So I shall not go to Suez at all. Going *from Cairo* is an extra expense, but then we save railway to Suez, and the expense of the hotel there, &c., so that it is not all loss.

I think I see my way, especially as I now feel persuaded that Djebel-en-Nūr is one of the three mountains seen by Dean Stanley. Abu Nabut had told Yakûb that *three* mountains were to be seen from the plain of the Arabah near Akaba, of which the Djebel-en-Nūr is one, and that when we get there, he will show it me through the telescope! What a wonderful thing it will be! and Dean Stanley saw it without knowing it, just as Dr. Porter went to Harran without knowing it to be "the Harran."[1] When I came back from the Consulate I found letters from Messrs. Tod advising me of the despatch of my two cases by railway, the agent here saying I may expect them to-day or

[1] See Mrs. Beke's "Jacob's Flight." Introd. p. 5.

to-morrow. So this is all right, and everything seems to be going on as well as I could desire; were it not for the confounded question of *filûss:* but we will try and remedy this as you shall see.

The *takhterawân*, or palanquin, will be shown me on approval: it seems to be a sort of easy chair, in which I think I may manage to sit for a few hours each day. I told Milne I thought of starting shortly. All he asked was a few hours' notice to pack up his mineralogical specimens! He has found some very interesting ones. I shall get him to make drawings of all the stations of the children of Israel from Succoth to the Encampment by the Red Sea, and thence to Rephedim and Sinai. After luncheon I went to the Consulate, and finally agreed terms with Abu Nabut—thirty days at five pounds per day, or £150, and five pounds for every day extra.

I have another proof that I am right. I spoke to Abu Nabut about "Jethro's Cave," which I wish Milne to go and see. He thought I meant a cave which he says is in the mountain *near Akaba*, exactly where I place Pi-ha-hiroth—the mouth of the caverns! I start from Cairo direct, and shall not enter Suez, but I shall write to you from thence, and shall come back to Cairo direct. Your letters

you must therefore send to the care of Mr. Rogers here, and you must forward me whatever money you get. God help me! and yet I am sure He will not abandon me in this momentous undertaking. Mohammed, who asked four pounds per diem, had the conscience to say he should want £102 for *extras*. So after all Abu Nabut is the "sheepest." Mr. Rogers has interested himself most kindly in the matter, and thinks I could not have done better. I have a thoroughly experienced man, and a *Sherrîf*, which is always of value amongst these people. The Hadj left for Mecca on the 18th of last month, so that the road is clear.

You have sent me some white clothes; but I don't feel inclined to wear them, for washing is such a frightful price here. They charge four pence each for collars and pocket handkerchiefs, and I do not know that they do not charge the same for each stocking! It is ruination living here: I shall indeed be thankful to be off. Colonel Morrieson has kindly called to say that he is going to the Pyramids to-morrow, and will take Milne with him, if he likes. Of course he accepts the kind offer, not so much on account of the Pyramids themselves, as because it will afford him an opportunity of measuring the dip of the Sphinx.

What a queer fellow he is! He has been out all day and brought home some *skulls!* The American artists have said they are coming out to see us off, and to take a sketch of my caravan! My expedition is talked of a good deal, I find.

January 8.—Milne is off to the Pyramids, and I have been to see Abu Nabut, Yakûb esh Shellaby, and Mr. Rogers, about the *takhterawân*, having doubts as to its jolting too much. They assure me it will not, and Mr. Rogers tells me he has ridden in one himself. I am now told that Nabut will not be ready to start till Monday morning, so that we shall have two days more at this hotel, Pazienza! I have corrected my "Notes from Egypt," and written a letter to Mr. M——, which please send off to him. I have also written a few lines to Mr. Bolton, at Stanford's, which you will send likewise. I have told him to keep the information "private," by which I mean that he should not publish it, though I do not object at all to his talking about it. I enclose a letter to Mr. Bates, the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society. I send *all* to you; both in order that you may see what I say, and also in order to save postage. I have written to our friend Mr. Thurburn, asking him to assist you as to the remittance of funds. It may be that

the best course will be, if you are pressed for time, to get him to telegraph through the Bank of Egypt in London, to their agent here at Cairo, to pay me at once whatever money you may have to send me. This would save my being delayed in Egypt on my return, and the consequent expense of my staying at the hotel to receive your remittance by letter.

I feel carried away by the inward conviction that I am right, and that all things will work together for my good. I feel that I am doing the work of the Almighty, and that He will not desert me whilst in His service. I cannot resist the impulse —I would call it inspiration—but I fear to be thought profane and presumptuous, which carries me on beyond the bounds of reason, and what is *called* common sense. I feel myself called on to do this work, and do it I must, let the consequences be what they may. Besides which I cannot turn back. Bear with and help me, as, indeed, I know you will, to the utmost in your power. All will yet come right, I feel assured, however black things may look just at present. Thank God, I keep my health pretty well, and I have taken no medicine, except Dr. Garrod's prescription: but I am getting tired of the hotel food, and wish I was

away. My cold has nearly left me. The weather appears to be setting in fine; though it has been very cold.

After luncheon I went to the Consulate to sign the contract with Abu Nabut, and paid him the balance of first half. Then, not having heard anything about the firman, I went to General Stanton. He had heard nothing, and recommended me to go to Nubar Pasha's divan, at the Foreign Office. There I told my business to his secretary—Somebody Bey—and was asked to take a seat. After a while His Excellency came out, and told me in the most gracious manner, that His Highness would have much pleasure in receiving me on Saturday morning at half-past ten or eleven o'clock at the Palace of Abdin. I thanked him, and said I would not fail to present myself to His Highness at the appointed time. I then asked about my firman, when His Excellency said it should be made out and sent to me at my hotel, so that I need not trouble myself to call. He shook hands with me most cordially, advancing towards the door of the anti-chambre, in which we were; and so thanking him, to which he replied, "Il n'y a pas de quoi," I left. I thought it only right to go and tell General Stanton. He had not heard of it; but said that he would probably

be at the Palace on Saturday himself. He informs me I have only to send up my card, and Nubar Pasha will present me. I don't expect any good to come of it. However, what I asked for in this respect at least, I have got. With regard to my funds for the continuation of our journey I find matters are not so bad as I had fancied they were. I had made a mistake either in my accounts, or in my cash; for I had taken it into my head that the hotel expenses, which will be some forty shillings per day, were forty shillings for each of us! All at once I have discovered my mistake. I have been sitting quietly in my room all the evening making notes about Beduins, &c., for the journey, and I am now going to bed to sleep, as I trust, in peace.

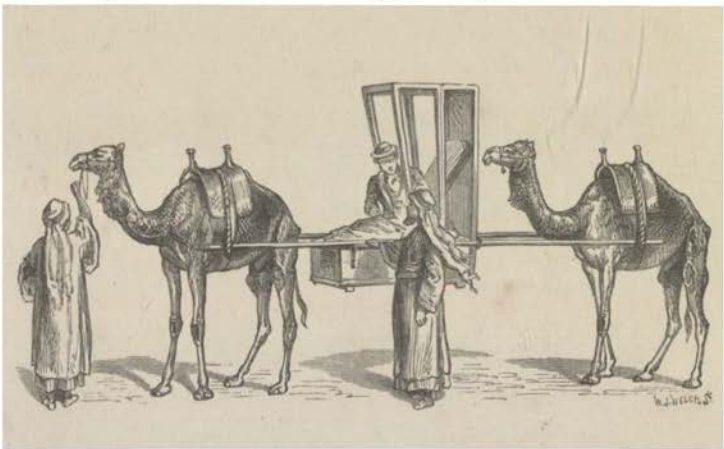
January 9.—During the night I have been thinking of what Mr. West wrote to me about the steamer of the Viceroy, which is going from Suez to Massowah. This is the vessel about which Nubar Pasha spoke, saying that she could not be spared; though he did not tell me that she had not gone to Massowah, but was doing duty as a tug in the Suez Canal, while one of the Canal tugs was taking Mr. Vivian to Port Said. I have now thought that if she has not yet left Suez, *but is going immediately*, the Viceroy, might be induced to let her so far

deviate from her direct course as to take me to Akaba, with my suite, the camels being ordered on to Akaba to meet me there. This would really be a *fluke*—almost too good to come true. But it is worth trying for. So I went off this morning the first thing to Mr. Beyerlé, and pressed him strongly to use his influence with Nubar Pasha, which he promised to do. His Excellency is not at business to-day, it being the Mohammedan Sabbath, and General Stanton is out shooting with Sheriff Pasha, so nothing can be done with him till to-morrow.

I then called on Mr. Rogers to ask him for his promised letters, which he says he will have written. We talked about my taking small money. He advises me to take half copper and half silver; but I have decided to take one pound in copper to three in silver. I have bought a *kefiya* from Yakûb for my hat, and Milne has also bought one. They are very necessary, as you know, being so great a protection against the sun. On Mr. Rogers's recommendation, I shall also take with me about twenty-five pounds in gold to give to Abu Nabut on the journey, in case he should be in need of it.

The *takhterawân* is something like a London

cab, only not on wheels, and without fixed sides and top; but these are supplied by means of cur-



tains which may be drawn or not *à discrétion*, forming, in fact, sometimes an open, and at others a closed cab. It has a mattress and cushion to sit upon, and a sloping footboard on which to rest the feet, instead of being stretched out, as I expected they would be. Mr. Rogers told me it would be fixed on the two poles attached to the camels, which would have made it jolt dreadfully; but Yakûb esh Shellaby has remedied this by suspending the *takhterawân* to the poles by means of ropes, which will serve as springs or something like them —the poles themselves being slung beside the camels, one before and one behind. It is a rough sort of contrivance, but not altogether uncom-

fortable. It is certain I could not perform the land journey without a palanquin, and even so, I should be well glad if I were saved the land journey *to* Akaba. Besides the saving of fatigue, it would give me more time there, so that by the time the camels arrived, I might be ready to start for Suez, and thus be back within the month. This afternoon Colonel Morrieson came to ask me and Milne to go out with him for a ride, but I declined with thanks. Milne is gone. Abu Nabut has been to ask whether I would let him have some more money at Akaba in case he should want it: *this I expected*, and therefore consented. Your remittance had better be sent to me in circular notes. I do not want you to pay money into the Bank of Egypt except in case of absolute necessity. This bank is, I am told, dearer in their terms than any other house. Tod, Rathbone, & Co. give half per cent., that is, ten shillings in a hundred pounds more than the bank. I trust I shall receive your letters before I start, so that I may answer them; and also know how you are: I should not like to start without.

January 10.—A most eventful day. In the first place, I received in the morning your dear letter of December 31st and January 1st, and am glad to

hear you are so much better, though still not quite well. I am much pleased with your letter to the "Times," which was very cleverly done. I had already seen it in the newspaper of December 30th, which was in the reading-room before your letter arrived. I also saw the notice in the later paper, without knowing it was from you. I am glad I got your letter before I went to the Khédive, because it refreshed my memory. I am only sorry I did not get the extract from my "Idol in Horeb," which I found on my return from the Palace. It is precisely what I was in want of; and now to tell you what occurred.

At 10.30 A.M. I started for the Palace of Abdin dressed in black, with frock-coat, and black neck-tie, being, as I am, in mourning. On my arrival at the Palace I was asked my name, whereupon I gave my card. My visit being expected, I was requested to walk into the waiting-room, where there was sitting one of the persons in attendance—I don't know his rank—who addressed me as Mons. le Docteur, and requested me to be seated. Coffee was soon served to us both, in the ordinary *finjal* with filigree stand. Other persons came in on business, for whom also coffee was brought, and I was

asked to take a second cup, but I declined. Here they drink coffee all day, as you know. After a quarter of an hour or so, during which I employed myself reading your letter, an attendant came in, to say that His Highness was prepared to receive me. I rose, but was told to wait for a minute or two. Another official then came, and said His Highness was ready to receive me, and asked me to accompany him. We then went up a broad staircase, thickly carpeted, two flights apparently, when I was shown into a room, in which were several officers richly dressed, and others in attendance. From a side room, which was filled with smoke as if it were a sanctuary—mark this as a matter for after consideration—Nubar Pasha issued, and shook hands with me, and took me to an inner room, close to the door of which I *was met* by a gentleman of about forty years of age, or perhaps not so much, dressed in the usual European dress, with frock-coat and tarbush: he shook hands with me most cordially, and asked me to walk in. I followed him into a further inner room, not quite clear in my own mind whether he was really the Khédive, whom I had expected to find seated in his Divan—as I had found Mohammed Ali Pasha in 1840—but these doubts were removed as soon as I

saw there was no one else in the room, and by his desiring me to sit down on a sofa, he himself taking an arm-chair close to the window.

Ismail Pasha is a very short, thick-set man. He has a fine intelligent face, and seems very good-natured. No one could be more amiable and courteous in his behaviour, which was that of one gentleman conversing on equal terms with another. Nubar Pasha sat in a chair near the Viceroy's end of the room, facing him. The conversation was commenced in French by the Foreign Minister, who explained to His Highness the object of my journey, &c., to which the Viceroy listened attentively, and *seemed* as if interested; a pause ensuing, I said that the object of my soliciting the honour of being allowed to pay my respects to His Highness was, that in 1840 I had passed through Egypt, and had paid my respects to Mohammed Ali Pasha of blessed memory, and that I wished to do the same to His Highness.

He expressed surprise at my having been in Abyssinia; so I had to explain all about my representations made to the British Government so long in vain, and what the late Mr. E. Egerton, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had said to me, when it was too late to save the country £9,000,000, namely, "Dr. Beke, if the Govern-

ment had followed your advice and policy, there would have been no Abyssinian captives, and no Abyssinian war!" This gave rise to the remark that persons in authority did not like to follow the advice of *savants*—or, as I added, persons out of their own circle—those not belonging to their own corps. I cannot repeat the precise words that were used on the subject, on which we all three had our say.

I then passed to the subject of my scheme for flooding the Libyan Desert, as a means of suppressing the slave trade.[1] The Khédive said he could not understand how it was known to be below the level of the ocean: he did not think it had ever been levelled. I spoke of the advantage it would be to commerce and civilisation to bring the sea near to Kordofan and Darfûr;[2] to which His Highness assented, but doubted the practicability, not to speak of the expense. As to the idea attributed to M. de Lesseps, of turning the waters of the Nile into the Desert, it was absurd. I mentioned that Dr. Schweinfurth had told me of the French project to inundate the Sahara behind Algiers.[3] The Khédive said he did not know that Dr. Schweinfurth was, or had been, in Egypt. He told

[1] See "Egypt As It Is," pp. 329–374. [2] Ibid. 170.
[3] This project is now actually in course of operation.

me that Schweinfurth is a Russian subject, but had undertaken his journey for Germany.

I next spoke of my having interested myself in the growth of cotton in Egypt; and that I had presented a "Memoir" on the subject to Said Pasha; and had published several papers on the matter.[1] But that in Said Pasha's time Egypt was not what it is now, and therefore I had not succeeded in accomplishing what I wished. My project *then* was to connect Taka with Suakin by a Tram or Canal, and *later* by a Railway.[2] To this His Highness said, the one was nearly, if not quite, as expensive as the other, in the first cost; and as to the railway wood could be found to take the place of coal. This I doubt, but I did not care to say so.

I had now been with the Khédive more than a quarter, indeed the best part of half, an hour. I paused, and was looking towards Nubar Pasha, as if to receive a signal from him to leave, when an animated conversation took place between the Khédive and His Excellency *in Turkish*, of which I understood only one word, "pecki," meaning

[1] "The Idol in Horeb," p. 91. London: Tinsley Brothers. 1871.

[2] It would appear that this scheme has been adopted by the Viceroy at the instance of Mr. Fowler, to whom Dr. Beke also communicated his plan. See "The Khédive's Egypt," pp. 353-357; "Egypt As It Is," p. 239.

"yes," "good," "very well"—assent generally—which the Prince kept repeating in reply to what his minister said. Nubar Pasha then rose, and I did the same. The Khédive rose also, and on my thanking him for the honour he had done me, he asked how long I expected to be absent, "a month or so?" and whether I returned by the way of Cairo. On my replying in the affirmative, His Highness said, shaking hands with me most heartily, "Alors à votre retour j'aurai le plaisir de vous serrer la main." I again thanked him and took leave; but His Highness accompanied me out of the inner room, and halfway (at least) across the second room; where I again bowed and left. What think you of this reception? But this is not all. As we descended the stairs, I said to Nubar Pasha, "Excellence, I said nothing to His Highness about the steamer as I promised, but I have now to tell you that I have heard"—and I was beginning to repeat what Mr. West had told me—when he stopped me by saying, to my surprise, "His Highness has ordered me to communicate with McKillop Bey to know whether it is practicable to give you a passage to Akaba; and if it can be done it shall." I could scarcely believe this, especially when he added, "I must telegraph to

McKillop Bey, who is at Alexandria, and will let you know when I get his reply." On my expressing my hope that it might be managed, he said it rested entirely with McKillop, who had the entire charge of the Marine. His Excellency was then going to pay a few visits—I had accompanied him down to the entrance, where he got into his carriage—and would go and telegraph immediately to Alexandria, he said. I got into my carriage, and drove off likewise; on my way calling at Messrs. Tod's to pay some money for postage and expenses, and then home.

On my way I met Mr. Beyerlé, to whom I told the good news. He was surprised, as only this morning he had spoken to Nubar Pasha, who told him it could *not* be done. I have not much expectation myself; but I thought I might do what I could to help it; so I sat down instantly and wrote a letter to my friend Mr. Fleming, asking him to intercede with his friend McKillop Bey, and also with Fedrigo Pasha. I had only time to write a few hurried lines, and as I was already too late for the town post, I had to send a donkey-boy off with my letter to the railway station. I must not omit to say that before leaving the Khédive's presence, I heard Nubar Pasha speak about a "firman," to

which was replied "pecki," with a reverence on the part of His Excellency, to show that the order would be obeyed. Whilst I was finishing my letter to Fleming, Mr. O., a visitor, on his way from India to England—a Madras civil servant—came and wished to speak to me. Milne had already told me he was much interested in my expedition, and introduced him to me—I mean before I left for Abdin; and he had evinced so much interest in my journey and its object, that I had given him a copy of my pamphlet. He now came to propose that he should join me. Milne had told me he seemed much inclined to do so. To cut a long matter short, he consented to give me £2, 10s. per diem if he went with me.

While I think of it, I wish you to say nothing about "Djebel-en-Nūr." From what Abu Nabut tells me, I imagine it must be on the wrong side of the Wady Arabah, and therefore not my Mount Sinai. But if so, I suspect I have heard before of *this* "Mount Sinai" somewhere. The subject must be left till I know something definite. I enclose you the agreement entered into between Mr. Milne and myself. It is dated to-day; but was, in fact, signed last night. I know he is afraid we shall not be back *in England* by the end of February. As far as the matter rests with me, we shall, for I am as

anxious and nervous on the subject as he can possibly be. Master Abu Nabut has been and done me out of another ten pounds on account. He is a *Nubian,* a people noted for their fidelity, and he seems an honest fellow, so I hope all will go well.

Now to answer your dear letter this evening as I must post mine to-morrow morning before church. You managed the "Times" letter very nicely. You are at liberty to make up as many letters as you please from what I write to you: having more time for consideration, you will often express yourself better than I do in my hurry, and you can leave out anything you do not approve of. By-the-by General Stanton was not at the Palace; at all events I did not see him. He has been most civil and obliging as far as *forms* go, and I have no substantial ground, or wish for believing him not to be willing to serve me, if he could do so, without putting himself much out of the way. I have now written likewise to Mr. Kay, and to Fedrigo Pasha, asking for their interest with McKillop Bey. I do not wish to leave a single stone unturned.

On my return I shall want one hundred and fifty pounds, or, perhaps, I ought to say two hundred; of course, Milne will go on to England direct through Egypt; but I must stop a few days here

myself, in order to see the Viceroy, as His Highness has invited me to do so. I have written to the publishers about my book, and, if I have time for this post, I will send you both this letter and one to Mr. Heugh to forward. You will see what I say. If you think fit you can enclose in the publisher's letter a copy of my agreement with Mr. Milne; and, should I die, *you* must write my book for me, from my materials. I will endeavour to make them as complete as possible during the journey; but I trust in God, who has so far protected me, to bring me home safely.

I see in the "Times" of the alteration in our old firm in King William Street, which is now Blyth, Greene, Jourdain & Co. What lucky fellows Burn-Blyth and Jourdain are! It is now just twelve o'clock, and I am so sleepy I must really go to bed. My cough is still a little troublesome; but only wants change of air to remove it altogether. If I am successful I will date you a telegram from "the Crater of Mount Sinai," which please therefore, enter in your list of telegram cyphers against the word "Palace." The beauty of the *word-telegrams* is, that if even they should happen to be misspelt, it does not signify.

January 11.—This morning I must finish, and

post my letters before going to church, so that I cannot give you any positive news about the steamer and the firman, or about our starting. I am to see the *takhterawân* to-day. The tent was seen by Milne and others yesterday; it is set up behind the New Hotel, and is said to be a very good one. It is like ours in Syria, namely, the ordinary kind, and not like the swell tents we took with us from Edgington's to Abyssinia. I have bought some whisky and brandy to take with us on the journey, an umbrella, and sundry little articles. If I get the steamer to Akaba I shall try to keep her long enough to allow me to ascertain the substantial correctness of my views; in which case I shall write to Munzinger Bey, to telegraph the news to General Stanton, whom I shall ask to publish it.

It would be very curious if the news reached Europe *via Massowah!* There is now a Government telegraph line to that place. I shall be glad to get away from here on Milne's account as well as on my own. He wants to be actively employed. Having used up all the *geological* facts that this bare region presents to him, he is now hard at work, studying Arabic, Italian, and French. I wish you would send me out a copy of my "Idol in Horeb," containing the paper (Appendix B) on

the Nile, for me to make use of on my return; or the leaves would be enough, as they contain all that I require to communicate to the Viceroy. Tinsley will give them to you if you ask him.

January 11, continued.—On my way to church, after posting my letter, I met our friend Mr. W. E. Cooke, the artist, who had just arrived in company with Professor Owen, and Mr. Fowler, the Khédive's engineer. I spoke to Cooke about my expedition, and gave him a copy of my pamphlet, which he said he would look at. Professor Owen, perhaps, I may see when I return. He is staying at Mr. Fowler's. Mr. Cooke is at the New Hotel. Now that the time of departure draws nigh, I am getting nervous and "funky." I feel as if I should like to go back, if I could. You know it is all fidgetiness; for if I were offered the option of giving it up, I should of course refuse. Still, I cannot help feeling nervous. I am off my feed, and shall be so till I am off. I ought not to tell you all this; but you know me so well that I may just as well say it, lest you should imagine me to be so *exalté* as not to possess any longer my ordinary feelings. No; I look at the matter in all its bearings, and I see and feel that I have no easy task before me, but one which will

require all my strength, and resolution, and presence of mind, to enable me to carry it through.

As I came out of church I saw Mrs. Stanton, and asked her whether it would be convenient for General Stanton to see me *to-day*. She said, "Yes, at two o'clock." After lunch, I was just going out, when a polite note came from Mrs. Stanton, saying that the General has an engagement at two o'clock, but asking me to go and dine there, when I should be able to say good-bye to them. Of course I accept, though I meant to be packing up; so I must do it now. But this going out to dine is a bother. This morning I was caught in a tolerably heavy shower of rain—in this place where it never used to rain—and had to take shelter in the tent.

I want to sit down and write some letters, but my hand shakes with pulling the boxes about and packing, and my mind shakes with thinking about all things. I wish it was all over, and I on my way home. How happy I should then be! In talking with a dragoman about Djebel-en-Nūr, he tells me it is seen from "Mount Sinai," *sixty-miles* off. It cannot, therefore, be one of the Sinaitic group by any possibility. I think it must certainly be a mountain of the range marked on the

map as Djebel-et-Tih, extending across from Suez to Akaba to the south of the Hadj road. If so I must see it on my right hand, as I approach Akaba. I daresay you think I am troubling myself with what ought not to concern me; but it does concern me, on account of the "tradition," which I expect to find to be of older date than that of the "Sinai of Tourists," and is most important to be used as an argument.

11.15 P.M.—I am just back from General Stanton's. There was only a small party, Colonel [now Sir J.] Stokes, R.E., one of the Suez Canal Commissioners, who has just arrived from Constantinople, and is staying with the Stantons; a Mr. Greenfield, the contractor for the Alexandria Breakwater; Mr. Clarke, the chaplain; and myself. Nothing particular took place. General Stanton was with the Khédive this morning (not yesterday), but I was not alluded to; in fact, the General forgot all about me. I told him of my reception, and he cannot make out *where* it took place. He never was at any place answering my description, and thought my reception was very *marked!* He could not understand how I should have imagined that Nubar Pasha would hand me over to a master of the ceremonies, or allow any one, in fact, to introduce

me but himself; to which I replied that I was not very familiar with Court etiquette. I only recollect that the Khédive's grandfather, Mohammed Ali Pasha, received me sitting on his Divan, and I naturally concluded that there would have been rather more ceremony. The fact seems to be that I was received in the Viceroy's private apartments. I told the General I intended starting to-morrow. He said, he thought I might stay two or three days longer, and let the camels go on to Suez without me, although he admitted that the firman, and the notice about the steamer, could be sent on to me at Suez, and also that I should be quite right in going to Nubar Pasha to-morrow morning, as I intend doing. So I took leave of him and Mrs. Stanton till my return from Mount Sinai. Of course, I had their best wishes, &c., &c.

January 12.—You will not be prepared for the blessed news I have to tell you. This morning, after breakfast, I called on Nubar Pasha to ask about the firman, and to say I was off to-day. I went to his private residence, which is much like that of any European gentleman. A female servant was taking up the breakfast-things as I went in. After waiting nearly half an hour His Excellency came to me, and presented me with the firman,

and he then put into my hand, to read, a despatch from McKillop Bey, saying I *could* have the steamer to take me to Akaba. I could hardly hold the paper for joy! If I had *only known this at first* I should have naturally altered my arrangements. As it is, I am bound by my contract with Abu Nabut, the only difference being that he will go straight on to Suez, where I shall meet him by train, and then take him and the cook on board with me, so we shall get to Akaba much quicker by ship than by caravan. This will involve an extra expense for hotel bill here and at Suez. But on the other hand it will very much shorten the length of the entire journey, for which I am most thankful. I shall not now leave Cairo till Wednesday morning. Nubar Pasha has telegraphed to McKillop Bey to ask when the steamer will be ready. McKillop says it will take four days for the voyage, and then three days back to Tor, to coal. Of course I thanked His Excellency most warmly.

With reference to Mr. O.'s accompanying us, I had almost arranged with Abu Nabut for a third traveller, when Mr. O. told me he is on his way home to be married, and expects to be called to England before the end of February, and on reflecting well over the matter, he did not see

how he could be absolutely *sure* of being back in time ; and in such a delicate matter as marriage, he could not break his engagement. If he could make sure of being back *here* by the middle of February, nothing would delight him more than to go with me.

I have explained to Mr. Milne that, as he is pressed for time it might suit his convenience to go straight on from Suez by steamer through the Canal when we return, to which he seems to have no objection. I am in such a whirl in consequence of this unexpected good luck, that I scarcely know how to set about what I have still to do. My first task is to communicate this good news to you. I have seen Mr. Rogers who is having the letters written to the Sheikh of Akaba, and the *Mûdir*—that is his Egyptian title—*Mutsellim*, is Turkish. My firman is addressed to the Sheikh. He is to render me every assistance, &c., but nothing is said about expenses. I must be glad to take what I can get. Please God all will go well. Do your best, dear, to help me, as I know you will. I am now going to see Mr. Fowler before I leave, and have a talk with him about a *Canal* from Taka to Suakin. This was Sir William Fairbairn's suggestion to me, instead of a Tramway.[1]

[1] 'The Idol in Horeb.' Appendix B, p. 104.

January 12, continued.—I sent you very good news about the steamer this morning *via Marseilles.* I shall telegraph shortly to you to-morrow, in order to anticipate my last gloomy letter *via* Brindisi. The cases and Milne's London package have gone off with the camels. My camels with the *takhterawân* stop behind, because Abu Nabut and Yakûb esh Shellaby have managed to "misunderstand my instructions." The chair of which it in reality consists is without any covering. As I told you, I consented to its not being closed in like a cab with windows, &c., but not that it should be without covering against the rain and the sun. But they pretend that when I waived the one I waived the other. This caused a bit of a row, and they hurried off to do as I intended they should. In the course of half an hour I am to see *how* they have complied with my wishes. If I am not satisfied, I tell them I will not go with Abu Nabut. The contract is for a *takhterawân,* not a mere open chair, so I am clearly in the right. Meanwhile I have been to tell General Stanton of my good news. He congratulated me, but said he did not expect it.

In the morning I was going to call on Professor Owen, and through him to make the acquaintance of Mr. Fowler; but on the way I met him

coming to my hotel, though not to call on me, of whom indeed he knew nothing. We walked together to the hotel, and had an interesting talk about my views, in which he substantially agrees; or, I should rather say, he goes much beyond me; believing, like Colenso, not in the untruth of the history as interpreted, but in the history itself! I spoke about Mr. Fowler, and he told me that the best time was to call on him towards sunset. As I had to go again to look at the *takhterawân*, I went towards his house rather earlier than Owen said, and luckily met Mr. Fowler just as he was coming out, on his way to Nubar Pasha's Divan. I walked with him, and explained to him my plan for a Canal between Taka and Suakin, which, he said, would be much more expensive than a railway, and, therefore, was not to be thought of.[1] I gave him, however, my paper[2] which you sent me, when he said he would look it over carefully. I then gave him a copy of my "Mount Sinai a Volcano," a subject in which, to my surprise, he seemed more interested than in my *Canal*. He condemned Owen's open assertion of his opinions, even if permissible among men of science. My *moderate* views he

[1] See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 353.
[2] See "The Idol in Horeb," Appendix Γ

thought highly of, and on taking leave of me, expressed the hope that he should see me on my return.

On coming into the hotel I received a letter from Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co., with the following message from Mr. Kay, "Inform Dr. Beke favourable answer sent to Government." Mr. Wolff adds, "We have no doubt you will understand the meaning of this message," which, "no doubt," I do. It was extremely kind of Mr. Kay to telegraph this. Now about the *takhterawân*. When I got to the spot I found the skeleton of the covering up, which, with a little alteration, is to my satisfaction. The covering will be of oiled cloth, so as to keep off the rain. The sides will be removable, to allow me to look about me when I like. Cushions for my arms are also added. Altogether, I think it will do very well. Yakûb is so delighted with it, that he means to ride in it past my hotel to show it off. My caravan consists of thirteen camels, and the Sheikh rides one. I wish we had a party of half a dozen, or more. But I was tied up by the expectation of the steamer, and only acted at the last moment in haste. Yet I feel confident all is for the best as it is: companions chosen at the last moment might have been anything but agreeable ones.

I have been on my legs all day, and am so tired I do not know what to do scarcely. If *exercise* is to keep off the gout, you may rely upon it I shall not have an attack till after I get home, and you spoil me by doing everything for me. I say it with thankfulness that I am really wonderfully well. Professor Owen, who is four years younger than me, is ten years older in appearance; and as a physiologist, he congratulated me on my *frame:* he would not hesitate, he said, to pass an assurance on my life. It has rained again to-day; and yet Nubar Pasha says he does not see any material change in the climate since he first came here! I do not think he will find many back him in this opinion. I had a cup of *café noir* with Nubar Pasha this morning, in a regular coffee cup, *à la Française,* or rather *à l'Anglaise,* handed on a tray by a servant in European clothes. It is the *ton* here to be quite European, or rather English. By the last mail an English nurse, or nursery governess, came out for one of the Viceroy's children.

At dinner, Mr. Gibbs, who sits at the table nearly facing me, asked me whether I knew Mr. Tuck, the telegraph agent at Suez, who is under him, as he should be happy to give me an introduc-

tion to him, when I said that I knew Mrs. Tuck, Mr. West's step-daughter. This was not the beginning of the conversation. He at first congratulated me on my having got the steamer, and asked me when I started. I told him that my camels started to-day, and that I hoped to follow them in a couple of days; when he said that he should like to have some further conversation with me respecting my journey, if I would allow him, to which I, of course, assented. I must tell you that yesterday he had called my attention to your letter in the "Times," which he fancied I might not have seen! After dinner he asked me into his room, which is on the ground floor near the dining-room. I had some time ago given him a copy of my pamphlet, he having spoken to me about my expedition. He is a busy, and to some extent an influential, person in this country, as being the head of the European Telegraph Company in Egypt, and as far as Aden. Well, what he wanted to know was the route I purposed taking when I started, &c. I knew perfectly well his object; but saw no reason why I should not tell him what I make no secret of with any one. I told him of the steamer being under orders to go to Massowah, to be under the orders of Munzinger Bey, which led

to a conversation about this latter, when Mr. Gibbs said that he is no longer at Massowah, "somebody" Bey, having been appointed in his place; to which I answered that I supposed then that he was at Taka. I heard that Munzinger [1] had been conniving at the slave trade, and had been *reported.* In the course of conversation, Mr. Gibbs said that he should be happy to receive, either himself, or through the agent at Suez, any communication I might like to make to him whilst on my journey, which should be telegraphed to London free of expense to me, for which I thanked him. I think it is a chance I ought to avail myself of. It will be better than writing letters. I told him I wanted to send a telegram to you, and wished to know whether I could send one of *ten* words. He at first thought I could not, but afterwards said I could. He however suggested that I should not send it till I knew for a certainty when I should start, and said that McKillop Bey would be here on Wednesday, and that he thought I ought to wait to see him. I shall send my telegram off to you nevertheless, and I told him so. The waiting here for McKillop Bey will not suit

[1] This official lost his life in the ill-fated Egyptian Expedition against Abyssinia in 1876.

my book, as I should be paying hotel expenses, whilst at the same time the camel hire is running on. I must endeavour to get on board the steamer as soon as possible, as I want to have all the time I can at Akaba before the camels arrive. It was nearly ten o'clock before I left Mr. Gibbs to come and write to you.

Mr. Milne is gone to the theatre. At dinner to-night he nearly drove me into leaving the table—I was almost going into hysterics from a remark he made. After Mr. Gibbs had congratulated me upon my having obtained a steamer, I said to Milne, Mr. Gibbs wants to telegraph home the progress of my discoveries; to which he replied, "What startling reports he will give! Discovered the Tables of the Law—Milne half way up the cone." The idea was so perfectly absurd that I burst out laughing. At the same time, though I could not check the laughter, I was so strongly impressed with the serious and momentous nature of information such as I hope to send home, that the two together almost overpowered me. Milne, of course, only looked at the amusing side of the question, and continued laughing and joking; whilst I, though I could not refrain from laughing, yet the serious view still predominated, till at last

I had to hold my head between my two hands, and cover my face—begging, nay, entreating him, to leave off, or I should really have to leave the room. At length he was quiet, and I recovered my equanimity. But it was a very close run. My laughing was with difficulty prevented from turning into a good fit of crying! When one reflects on the subject, it becomes a very serious one indeed. I wish it were all over!

Mr. Milne has come in, not having been to the theatre as he intended, but remained below watching the preparations for a grand supper, given by a Russian princess, who is staying in the house, on this their New Year's day, or rather, I believe, it is to-morrow, their 1st of January, and the supper is for the purpose of *beginning* the New Year. It is in a private dining-room, on the opposite side of the house, so that I saw nothing of it, as I came from Mr. Gibbs. I fancy she is a Madame de Bekestow (toff)—no "princess," unless incognito.

January 13.—This morning I went to call on Nubar Pasha. I was kept waiting upwards of two hours. It was apparently his reception day, and some twenty persons were there with me, among them Mr. Beyerlé, and a Greek priest of rank, a

bishop, I believe. Mr. Beyerlé and several others went into an inner room where I fancied His Excellency was; but it appeared that I was wrong, as after a time he came into the room as if from upstairs, walked quickly across it, we all rising and salaaming—I bowing, of course—and went straight up to the priest, whose hand he kissed, and then took him into a side room. After a few minutes the priest and a gentleman with him came out and went away. Shortly after Nubar Pasha came out of the room and crossed over to me. He seemed not to be best pleased, for he cut me very short by saying that he had telegraphed to McKillop Bey, and as soon as he heard from him he would let me know. I explained to him that I was starting for Suez, and so I left, he wishing me *bon voyage.* While I was waiting, coffee was brought in *on a tray;* the coffee was in *finjals* and the filigree stands were placed behind them. I, in reaching across for mine to put my cup in it, knocked over the other cups and upset the coffee, some of which—a very little—fell on the cushion of the divan I was sitting on. The servant brought a cloth to wipe it up, and on my expressing regret he said, "*Ça ne fait rien: ça porte le bonheur!*" Inshallah! I said.

From Nubar Pasha's I went to Mr. Rogers, who gave me letters to the Sheikh, and to the Governor of Akaba. I got his dragoman (chief clerk) to translate the firman, which ran as follows:—

"*To the Sheikh of the Arab Tribes at Akaba.*

"Dr. Beke, an illustrious Englishman, being about to proceed to Tor for some historical discoveries, you are, on his arrival in your district, to receive him with due reverence and respect, and to give orders to whom it may concern to receive him well, and assist him in all his requirements for facilitating his journey, as long as he may be in need of the same. Cairo 23, Zilkade 1290 (Jan. 11, 1874). The seal of Ahmed Kheiry Pasha, Moohrdâr (seal bearer) of His Highness the Khédive."

This is strong enough, I trust. Abu Nabut when it was read to him seemed very much pleased; but he wanted to see a letter to the Governor of Akaba likewise, and was not a little gratified when he saw that of Mr. Rogers. You will see the firman speaks of "Tor," which is in fact the traditional Mount Sinai; but Mr. Rogers says this does not at all signify. It is sufficient for the Sheikh to know he has the Khédive's orders to assist me in my "discoveries." I went upstairs to take leave of Mrs. Rogers, and then gave orders to Abu Nabut to be

ready to start to-morrow for Suez. The cook and servant went off with the camels.

When I went home I found a letter from McKillop Bey, telling me of Fedrigo Pasha having called and shown him my letter; but he had already written to Nubar Pasha about the steamer. He says she has a *small* cabin, with the means of cooking on board, &c. He has written to-day to ask about a pilot, and to suggest the *painting of her bottom* before starting. (Afterwards found to have been very necessary, only the paint-brush slipped through and made a *hole* in her bottom.) I fear this would cause delay, so I have written off to him sharp, begging him to expedite the business, and telling him I am off to Suez to-morrow. He finished his letter by saying, "I must tell you that the 'Erin' is *very* small." And Mr. Fleming, from whom I have since heard, says she is not very comfortable, so that I must make up my mind to rough it. But I hear from a Mr. Thompson that she is a good sea-boat, and her commander, a Maltese, a good sailor, having brought her from Malta to Port Said in very bad weather. Inshallah! it will be all right. In addition to Mr. Fleming's letter I have one from Mr. Kay, saying he had seen Captain Morice, McKillop's deputy, the latter being ill, and that he

had telegraphed to me. He will be here to-morrow, and hopes to see me, or rather *not* to see me, as this will show I am getting forward. He is very kind, in fact, everybody is kind; and God is kindest of all, in having favoured me thus far.

This morning before going in to luncheon I saw Mr. Gibbs, with whom I arranged to send any information I might have of importance to Mr. Tuck, at Suez, for him to telegraph it to Mr. Gibbs, who would then forward it to London, New York, or elsewhere, free of expense to me. I hear that Munzinger was here a few weeks ago and has got reinstated. I suppose his "explanations" were deemed sufficient, and all the blame thrown on his secretary. It is always the poor *secretaries* who are wrong! but if I recollect rightly, he himself said in one of the public journals that the slave trade was being carried on, and *he was obliged to shut his eyes to it.* Perhaps it was this *unusually candid* confession that offended the Egyptian Government. However, he is now in favour again, and the 'Erin' is going to Massowah to be under his orders. I have just heard from Colonel Stokes that the Khédive has issued orders that the officers in his service are to appear in uniform; this is in imitation of Germany.

Now to business. I have been thinking about my "Notes from Egypt," sent you by last post, for the "Athenæum." If the editor inserts them it will bring me in only a guinea or so; and he may cut out all that most concerns me, just as he has done in my review of New's Book. Now, although I shall not be paid for it, I think it will be better to send it to the "Times": *that* paper is read everywhere, and by everybody that you know in England and that I know in Egypt, where numerous persons have spoken to me or to Milne about your letter. If the "Times" does not insert it, you can still send it to the "Athenæum." So I telegraph to you to stop it. And now I want you to take the trouble to copy it carefully out, making such improvements as you may think desirable. Just now is a good time for the appearance of such a letter: everybody being in town; and I am sure this will be of more value to the public and to me than one guinea from the "Athenæum," payable April 1st —Tom Fool's day.

I know now what was the matter with Nubar Pasha this morning. It is the New Year's day of the Armenians as of all the Eastern Churches, and when all the world came to congratulate him, I came to bother him with business. It was a blun-

der on my part, which is worse sometimes than a crime. I cannot work any more, but must go to bed. It is half-past eleven, and I am quite tired out.

NOTES ON EGYPT.[1]

"*Cairo, January* 11, 1874[2]:—Since my arrival in Cairo on the 23d ultimo my time and attention have been mainly concentrated on the arrangements for my contemplated visit to the volcanic region lying to the east of the head of the Gulf of Akaba, where, in the 'three low peaks' seen by Dean Stanley, and described by him in page 84 of his 'Sinai and Palestine,' as being 'visible beyond the gap in the hills on the east,' when he was 'going northwards along the wide and desert valley of the Arabah,' I calculate on finding the true Mount Sinai—the said 'gap' being the entrance to the Wady *Ithem*, described by Burckhardt as 'leading eastward towards Nedjed,' and identified by myself with the '*Etham* in the edge of the wilderness' of Exodus xiii. 20, its scriptural name being, as will be perceived, retained to this day.

"Notwithstanding my occupations, I have nevertheless found time to jot down a few notes on EGYPT. A few days ago I paid a visit to the

[1] Much of the information contained in the following "Notes" is recorded in Dr. Beke's journal; but I have thought it well to repeat it here, in a more connected form.

[2] See "Athenæum," January 24, 1874, and "Hastings Observer," February 7, 1874, &c.

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Boulak, under the able direction of Mariette Bey, of whose labours and researches during more than twenty years it is the fruit, and with whom I had the gratification of holding a long and most interesting conversation, the main subject of our discourse being the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth dynasties of Manetho, of whom he has brought to light so many important relics, now preserved in the Museum. Respecting these people—whose descendants of a totally distinct type from that of the ancient Egyptians still exist in the vicinity of Lake Menzaleh—Mariette Bey says in his valuable 'Aperçu de l'Histoire d'Egypt,' page 41, 'Strong presumptions tend to make us believe that the patriarch Joseph came into Egypt under the Shepherds, and that the scene of the touching history related in Genesis was the court of one of these foreign kings. Joseph therefore was not the minister of a Pharaoh of natural extraction. It was a Shepherd King, that is to say, a Shemite like himself, that Joseph served, and the elevation of the Hebrew minister is the more easily explained on the assumption that he was patronised by a sovereign of the same race as himself.'

"The conclusion thus arrived at by the accomplished Egyptologist from the consideration of the sculptured remains of the Hyksos is so confirmatory

of my hypothesis that the Mitzrites, under whom the Israelites were in bondage, were not Egyptians, that I could not refrain from dwelling on it in my conversation with Mariette Bey, and I pointed out to him that the fish which the statues of his Hyksos or Shepherds—my Mitzrites—are seen bearing, and perhaps offering to their deity, have apparently some connection with Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines,[1] especially as the Philistines are stated[2] to be a branch of the Mitzrites. This idea would seem not to have occurred to him before, and he said he would at once make *une petite étude la dessus.* In connection with this subject I may remark further that the latest 'Egyptian' authorities place the Rameses of Exodus and the land of Goshen, at or near Ismailia on the Suez Canal, altogether to the east of the 32d meridian; so that, on an impartial consideration of the entire subject, it will be seen that the difference is now very small between the results of recent investigations and my views of forty years' standing. I trust that ere long the difference will become still smaller. From Monsieur Mariette I learned that the French Government are seriously contemplating the flooding of the Sahara behind Algiers, by letting in the waters of the Mediterranean from the Lesser Syrtis. I do not know whether their acquisition of the Island of Tunis, of which I have also heard, has any-

[1] 1 Sam. v. 4. [2] Gen. x. 13, 14.

thing to do with this project. Several years ago there was a talk of a scheme of M. de Lesseps to lay the Libyan Desert under water from the Red Sea; but as I showed in the 'Athenæum' of August 14, 1869, this would be impracticable; whereas, on the assumption that the Desert is below the level of the Mediterranean, I pointed out that its inundation from the Greater Syrtis or Gulf of Sidra might be a work of comparatively little difficulty.[1] How immense its importance would be I hope to show on a future occasion.

"On my return from Boulak, I received a very pleasing visit from Dr. Schweinfurth on his way through Cairo to the Oasis Khargeh, or Great Oasis, which he purposes exploring thoroughly. From him I learned several matters of interest which I will now communicate. The well-known Italian traveller, Signor Miani, died recently at Khartum. He had penetrated as far to the south-west as Schweinfurth himself, but not being so young or so robust as the latter, he sank under the fatigues of a journey which, from Dr. Schweinfurth's description of it, now probably before the public, could be borne by few. On the other hand the German traveller, Dr. Nachtigall, has succeeded in traversing the hitherto-untrodden country of Wadai, where unhappily my young friend Vogel lost his life, and in reaching Khartum in safety, by

[1] "The Idol in Horeb," p. 91.

the way of Darfûr and Kordofan. As regards himself the Doctor assured me that the report of his having received material aid from the Khédive is without foundation, for that he obtained only the moral support of the Egyptian Government. So, too, the assistance rendered by the Viceroy to Dr. Rohlfs' expedition into the Libyan Desert has been greatly exaggerated, his subsidy to it being limited to the sum of £4000 sterling.

"When Mr. Milne and I came to Cairo from Alexandria on the 23d ultimo, nothing was more striking to me, who have visited Egypt several times since 1840 (when I went on my first journey into Abyssinia, but have not been here since 1866, when I passed through in company with my wife on our way to and from the latter country), than the many great changes for the better that have taken place throughout Egypt. When once Lake Mareotis[1] and

[1] In the "Times" of February 1, 1878, a correspondent says:—"The second public work which is proposed is the draining and bringing under cultivation Lake Mareotis. . . . At present it is a vast marsh, 90 miles in circumference, and its basin is 8ft. below the level of the sea, which is so close that at Aboukir a strong sea wall is necessary to prevent inundation. At the beginning of the century it was almost dried up. Portions of it were even cultivated, and many villages had risen up in its bed. But the English, under General Hutchinson, in their siege of Alexandria in 1801, deemed it a step justified by war to let in the sea at Aboukir in order to shut off the besieged French Army from all communication with Cairo. The strategical move was successful, but a vast tract of country, 200,000 acres in extent, and 40 villages were submerged. The reclamation of this marsh has often been proposed. Foreign enterprise has offered to do it, provided that the exclusive enjoyment

the dreary waste on the western side of the Rosetta branch of the Nile are passed, the country, far and wide, exhibits unequivocal signs of improved and extended cultivation. I am told that whereas in 1850 there were only two millions and a half of acres under culture, there are now at least five millions.[1] The cotton harvest is just at an end,

of the reclaimed land is granted for a certain term of years. Such a proposal has recently been renewed by a Dutch company, whose nationality guarantees a knowledge of the science of irrigation. Hitherto their proposal has not been accepted, and it is said that the point of difference lies in a natural insistence on the part of the Khedive that the reclaimed land should be subject to the ordinary fiscal regulations. The taxation of land in Egypt newly brought into cultivation begins three years after reclamation, and gradually rises to the level of other freehold lands in their payments. Perhaps this difficulty may be surmounted, or another company may be formed more ready to accept what seems a necessary condition of land tenure in any country. The mere reclamation would only be a matter of time and steam pumping. Then would come the more difficult task of preparing the soil for cultivation. It is at present so impregnated with salt as to be unfit for most crops. But the Mahmoudieh Canal, one of the largest offshoots from the Nile, is close by. From it an abundant supply of water could be obtained, and three years' washing by periodical inundation would clear the land from all the salt, and leave a fresh virgin soil behind fit for every kind of crop. Another beneficial result should not be forgotten. Alexandria is at present the favourite haunt of fever, and all the doctors concur in saying our neighbour the marsh is the cause. Its removal would obviously be an immense gain for the city in the matter of health as well as prosperity." See also Mr. E. De Leon's "Khédive's Egypt," p. 269; and Mr. J. C. M'Coan's "Egypt As It Is," pp. 248–250.

[1] "The land already under cultivation in the Delta is not brought to the point of high production, and there are literally hundreds of thousands of acres not yet tilled or planted which would amply return the first cost of reclamation. All that is wanted is more hands. Proposals have been made to the Government for the importation of

and the peasants are busily employed in cleaning

Chinese and Coolie labour; but the Khédive has never taken to the idea very warmly. He is tired of the irrepressible foreigner who has oppressed him at every turn, and is reported to have said that he certainly 'would not add to the list of his Consular dictators the name of a Chinese Consul-General.' To those who know how some of our diplomatic agents here have used their power this speech is not without reason." (See the "Times," March 15, 1878.) "Three schemes are now more or less discussed, and all are of vital interest to the prosperity of the country. . . . The first is the completion of the Barrage. . . . Cotton requires water more than any other crop, and at a time when the Nile is lowest. It is now our most important product, and our exports have risen from four millions to thirteen. It is fortunate, therefore, that the idea of the Barrage has revived with new life. The science of irrigation on a large scale has enormously advanced, and what seemed difficult in 1847 is now a work of comparative ease. The vast dams, or annicuts, in India on the Canvery, or the Godavery, or the Kistnah rivers, are works of a similar kind and scale, and their complete success is abundantly proved by the large return they make on the capital expended. All experts are agreed that the Barrage would bring under cultivation some hundreds of thousands of acres of land now barren, and would greatly increase the productiveness of much of the cultivated area by the supply of water at all seasons. It must also be borne in mind that in Egypt every canal by its banks is a roadway as well as a water way, and thus doubly increases the communications of the country. As regards the cost, a small water cess such as is levied in Lombardy would speedily redeem the capital expended. The estimate, as made by Mr. Fowler the Viceroy's consulting engineer, of the cost of the Barrage and the necessary canalisation, is under two millions sterling. But the difficult question remains how to obtain this capital at a time when Egyptian credit is exhausted, and her revenues are mortgaged up to the hilt. Two plans are proposed. The first is to induce foreign capital to take up the schemes by the offer to mortgage the water cess for a certain number of years and to insure its fair and punctual collection. There is little doubt that there is private enterprise and unemployed money in abundance in Europe ready for such a scheme, and its adoption would only be a question of terms. But, say philo-Egyptians, this is a public work which ought not to be

and ploughing the land.[1] In one instance I saw what I do not remember to have remarked before, a *camel* drawing the plough. Green crops of various kinds are growing luxuriantly, and it is pleasing to see the animals, black cattle, asses, sheep, and goats, grazing in the rich pasture without stint. Trees not only line the road on both sides, but have been planted so extensively that many parts of the country have the appearance of being well-wooded. Altogether the run across the Delta on a lovely, cool, but sunny day, was most delightful, and I am not in the least exaggerating when I say that I was

made a source of profit such as any joint-stock company would demand. Moreover, the total absence of local capacity for association destroys one of the main arguments in favour of such works being done by private enterprise. The settlement of a gigantic foreign company in the heart of the country would not in any way teach the native Egyptians self-help and self-dependence. Why, then, should not the profit the strangers would demand be kept at home? The means are at hand for the State to do the work. At present half a million of revenue is annually set aside for the *amortissement* of the public debt. If this sinking fund were suspended only for four years, the Barrage and the canals could be constructed; the expenditure would be recouped in a very few years by a water cess, which would be a payment for value received, not a tax; Egypt would be the gainer by a vast public work of great permanent value, and the creditors would be more secure in the increased productiveness of the country. It seems a golden but not impossible picture." See the "Times," February 1; "Egypt As It Is," pp. 182 and 200–206; and "The Khédive's Egypt," pp. 202–204 and 236.

[1] The cotton crop of 1875–76 was 3,000,000 cantars, the largest ever known. That of 1876–77 was 2,500,000. See "The Idol in Horeb," p. 100, and also M'Coan's "Egypt As It Is," p. 192.

often inclined to doubt whether I could really be in Egypt. The sight, here and there, of tall factory chimneys rising out of the midst of the villages, or from among the trees, tended to increase the illusion.

"The fact is, that Egypt, though geographically forming a part of Africa, is rapidly assimilating herself to Europe, of which she desires to be regarded as a member.

"The condition of the lower classes generally, both in town and country, has likewise much improved. Ophthalmia, perhaps the greatest curse of Egypt, is far less frequent and less virulent. If the people are not better fed, they have at all events constant food. Those in the town seem to be better clad. In Cairo shoes are worn much more than formerly, not merely the native slippers, but European boots. I have just noticed a man in the usual native blue cotton frock, apparently the driver of a hack-carriage, actually having *his boots blacked* by a lad scarcely less meanly clad than himself. As regards the Fellahín, or peasants, they are better protected from the weather in their mud-huts, which are generally much better roofed than formerly, and oftentimes better built. In some places one sees dwellings for the labourers approaching to a European type. On the other hand, several of the native villages of the last generation are deserted, and their mud-huts are rapidly falling into decay. Such must have been the fate of the "treasure

cities" built by the Israelites for Pharaoh with bricks, which there is no reason to suppose to have been *burnt* bricks and straw; and hence it is intelligible that no traces of them should now remain.

"No doubt there is a dark side to the picture of Egyptian prosperity. The people, like the Israelites of old, work not for themselves, but for taskmasters, who 'make their lives bitter with hard bondage; all their service, wherein they render them service, is with rigour.' Still, on the whole, the balance is decidedly on the side of good. The greatest and most important change, as being likely to be the most lasting, is, however, in the climate, consequent on the bringing of the land under culture, and on the planting of trees.[1] Egypt is fast losing its proverbial rainless character. At Alexandria, as is well known, rain is now so frequent as to have become a source of annoyance; but, until quite recently, Cairo has prided itself on its almost total exemption from rain. 'At Cairo,' says the new edition of Murray's "Handbook," 'five or six showers would be the (yearly) average, and these not at all heavy.' But I am assured, on good authority, that during last year there were no less than twenty-one or twenty-two days of rain; and only a week ago, since my arrival here, we had four-and-twenty hours of rain, as heavy and continu-

[1] See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 61; and "Egypt As It Is," pp. 352-54.

ous as any in London,—in fact, a regular English wet day. The consequence was, that the unpaved streets were ancle deep in mud, and all 'circulation' was suspended, except in carriages: there was even '*riposo*' at the Opera for want of an audience. It may easily be imagined that the ignorant Arabs attribute this extraordinary change in the seasons to some supernatural cause, and, as it has taken place since the accession of Mohammed Ali, they conclude that he and his dynasty have possessed the means of bringing it about. And so they have in fact, though not in the way imagined by their superstitious subjects. Another curious instance may be given of how these people attribute results to wrong causes. It is matter of history that four-and-twenty centuries ago the Persian invader, Cambyses, injured and destroyed many of the monuments of ancient Egypt, and among them (as is generally considered) the Vocal Statue of Memnon, at Thebes. It is also matter of history that, during the present century, Professor Lepsius defaced several of the existing monuments by depriving them of their sculptured figures and inscriptions. The natives of the country, who know nothing of dates, and entertain the most vague notions respecting everything that occurred before their own time, having heard from their fathers of Lepsius's vandalism, but nothing of that of Cambyses, not unnaturally confound the one with the other, and so

Dr. Lepsius is asserted by them to have been the destroyer of the Vocal Memnon, as if he had not already sins enough of his own to answer for.

"If the changes in the agricultural districts and in the climate of Egypt have been great, those in Alexandria[1] and about the capital of the country are not less so. The Khédive seems determined to make

[1] "The great improvement which calls for accomplishment [as instanced by Dr. Beke at page 149] is the removal of the reef that bars the entrance to the port of Alexandria. Its existence ought no longer to be tolerated. Shipping to the amount of 1,300,000 tons enters the port every year. The exports amount in value to 13 millions sterling. The imports come to 5 millions. The harbour works, which are near completion, when finished will have cost two millions and a half, and the conveniences then offered will put Alexandria next to Marseilles, Trieste, and Genoa in the rank of Mediterranean ports. Yet no ship can enter the port after nightfall, and all vessels of considerable draught cannot enter at all either by day or night in stormy weather. Alexandria Bay is 5 miles across, but as you near the harbour you find shoal water almost everywhere, across which for more than a mile stretches the new breakwater. The real deep-water channel, the only passage for large ships, is not 100 ft. across, and has the additional drawback of being very circuitous. Its depth is only 27 ft., so that in rough weather vessels of deep draught dare not venture in for fear of touching the rock in the trough of the sea. Barely a month ago, during a forty-eight hours' gale, the Austrian Lloyd and English mail steamers and several merchantmen dare not venture out of harbour, while four large vessels tossed about outside in the offing for thirty-six hours, and the English turret-ship 'Rupert' actually put back to Port Said rather than venture in. A careful survey has been recently made by a skilful English engineer of the amount of rock it would be necessary to remove in order to widen and deepen the channel sufficiently to permit entry and exit at all times and in all weathers. The work required proves by no means insurmountable. It is said that a tithe of what has been spent on the harbour would make its entrance safe, and it seems penny wise and pound foolish not to take the matter in hand at once." See the "Times," Feb. 1, 1878.

Cairo the Paris of the Levant. The western portion of the city is being almost entirely rebuilt, and extensively enlarged in the direction of the Nile, whilst new streets are being opened through the other quarters. But on this subject I need not dilate. [Is it not all written in Murray's 'Handbook;' 'The Khédive's Egypt,' p. 47; and 'Egypt As It Is,' p. 51 ?] It is only to be hoped that, in his zeal to modernize and Europeanize Cairo, the Viceroy will not deprive it of its Oriental character, which constitutes its great charm and attraction.

"With reference to Sir Samuel Baker's Expedition, it is reported here, to have cost half-a-million sterling,—I have since been informed, on good authority, that the sum the Viceroy is out of pocket somewhat exceeds £400,000—and according to all accounts the results are anything but commensurate with the immense outlay. However, after his first disappointment, the Khédive is said to be not dissatisfied—'*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*' Colonel Gordon, who has entered His Highness's service to undertake the exploration, and, it must be added, the conquest and annexation of those southern regions, will know how to take up and unite the broken threads; and there can be little doubt that under his skilful management the policy of the Egyptian Government will eventually be successful. That policy is broadly and unequivocally stated by Mariette Bey, in the

Introduction to his 'Aperçu,' already referred to: 'History,' says he, 'teaches us that Egypt is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, and on the south by the Cataract of Assuan. But history, in fixing these limits, does not take into account the indications furnished both by geography and by ethnography. At the north-east of the African Continent, from the sea to the equator, there extends an immense tract of country formed by the river, and fertilised by it alone. On the other hand, of the various races that people the banks of this river some are uncivilised, savage, and incapable of governing themselves; whilst on this side of the tropic we meet with a nation, which, on the contrary, merits the admiration of mankind on account of its glory, its industry, and all the elements of civilisation contained in it. *History, then, ought rather to say that Egypt extends wherever the Nile flows, and that consequently Egypt has the right to claim as her domain all the countries watered by this celebrated river as far as they extend towards the south.*'[1] It would not be difficult to expose the fallacy of this reasoning. But all that needs now to be said is, that such being the avowed object of the Khédive, it is manifest that the task of the accomplished British

[1] It will be seen that Mr. J. C. M'Coan in his recent work, "Egypt As It Is," p. 3, note, has adopted word for word Dr. Beke's translation of this important passage.

engineer officer who has just entered His Highness's service in the place of Sir Samuel Baker, is not only to explore the basin of the Upper Nile, but to enforce Egypt's claim to all the countries watered by that river; and that if any man is capable of carrying out the ambitious views of Ismail Pasha with moderation and success, it is 'Chinese Gordon.'"

Since the foregoing "Notes" were written by Dr. Beke in 1874 very few changes have occurred except in the financial condition [1] of this naturally highly-favoured country; but in spite of all these difficulties with which Egypt has of late had, and has still, to contend, I venture to predict that there is still a glorious future in store for her. The natural resources of the country are so great, that with economy and a moderately good government, and the contemplated improvements referred to at pages 273–275, 280, one may confidently look for a satisfactory result. The enormous advance which education has made in Egypt;[2] the realisation of the plans for increasing the lands, and facilities for agricultural purposes; Dr. Beke's and Mr. Fowler's Soudan railway[3] being extended to Suakin in the

[1] See the "Times," 19th May 1877.
[2] "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 271. [3] Ibid. p. 353.

Red Sea, (by which the overland route to India would be shortened by three days, and commerce with the interior largely developed); together with the noble efforts of Gordon Pasha in the *East* for the suppression of the slave trade[1] and the advancement of commerce; and those of Captain Burton in the *West*, in developing the mineral resources of the country—must surely conduce to restore Egypt to the highest state of financial prosperity. If anything were wanting to suggest perfect confidence in the future of Egypt, it would be that Egypt should place itself under the *sole* protectorate of England, and abstain from further aggressions on Abyssinia.

Had the British Government only followed Dr. Beke's policy and advice, and retained possession of Abyssinia, or at least of Zulla, in 1868, the £9,000,000 which was spent on the Abyssinian Expedition would now have been found not to have been spent in vain.

[1] "Egypt As It Is," pp. 329–374. See "Geological Notes on Cairo," by Mr. John Milne, F.G.S. Published by Trübner & Co. 1874.

CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT—VOYAGE ROUND THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, OR PSEUDO MOUNT SINAI—DISCOVERY OF MIDIAN—VOYAGE UP THE GULF OF AKABA—RED SEA, OR SEA OF EDOM.

Suez, January 14, 1874.—We left Cairo at nine o'clock this morning for Suez, and travelled with Colonel Morrieson. We had a carriage to ourselves all the way, which made it very pleasant for conversation; and having lunched and changed carriages at Zagazig, we arrived at Suez at seven o'clock in the evening. The Colonel is come on to look about him a little, and intended to go along the Suez Canal, and stay a day or two at Ismailia; but he saw enough *en passant* to satisfy him. It is a wretched place, and although the Land of Goshen is placed there by M. de Lesseps, Mr. Holland, and others, it seems pretty clear from *geological* evidence that the Israelites could never have lived there. There is no fertile soil down to the rock!

On our arrival we came direct to the hotel; but

found it quite full. Having asked for three rooms, and being at first told there were none, we talked of going somewhere else, but heard there were nothing but second-class hotels (which I believe to be the fact), and that these were also full, with second-class people of course. They say that the people are *staying* here! What they can possibly find in Suez to "stay for," I cannot tell; but so it appears to be. After a good deal of talk the hotel people said they could give us one double-bedded room, (out of which they had to clear off lots of ladies' things!) and they could make up a third bed in it, or make one up on the sofa in the saloon. Colonel Morrieson and I took the bedroom; and Mr. Milne the sofa. We then had a wash (Milne in our room, for he had nowhere else), and then went down to dinner.

The 'Erin' is here, and is gone into the harbour. I hope it is not to have the bottom painted, as that will take some time to do. I am half inclined, if she is likely to be long, to go on with the camels which will be here to-morrow afternoon. Time is killing me! 11.30.—I have sat up in my room writing to Sir W. C. Trevelyan, Mr. Scrope, and others. I enclose these letters for you to forward. My bed-fellow is gone to bed, and is asleep!

January 15.—I was up this morning soon after

seven ; had a cup of coffee, and went to call on Mr. Levick at eight. He was very glad to see me, and we had a bit of a chat. I told him I wanted to see the proper authorities; so he sent me to Seid Bey—the something or other here. I did not see him, but I saw his deputy, who said it was all right, a telegram having been received last night. But I must go and see Mohammed Pasha, whose position here I don't exactly know, except that he is an admiral. He was not up, but I learned that he would, in the course of the morning, be going in his boat to the harbour from the quay in front of the hotel, and I could see him there. Abu Nabut, who accompanied me, suggested that I should not make myself too cheap by running about after people *not so big as myself;* and I could hear the fellow talking about me as one of the Omra (*Emirs,* or "Lords") of England. I have no objection to air my dignity; but if I am to lose time by doing so, I had better put my dignity in my pocket. However, I came to the hotel and had breakfast at nine o'clock, and afterwards, when Mohammed Pasha came down to his boat, I went out to him. He was very civil and polite, and said the steamer should be got ready *at once,* &c. All this looks very much like delay. I said that my camels with

the goods would arrive this afternoon, and I wanted to put them on board. He replied that the steamer should be brought alongside the quay, and if not to-day, my goods could be left till to-morrow, when she will come for them. Among his attendants was an Englishman, (Captain) Forster Bey, the harbour master here, who showed me a very nice letter from McKillop Bey, and said that if it depended upon him, I should have the boat in a few hours. But the everlasting Oriental procrastination prevented him from saying how long it might be. However, I might depend on his doing all in his power to expedite matters. The 'Erin' is a nice little boat, with good engines, and about eighty, or perhaps, a hundred tons burden. She is quite sea-worthy, and will have a good captain; —if not, he said, he would try and go with me himself. This is all gammon, as she is not coming back to Suez!

My business being thus far completed, I went to Mr. Levick again, and saw Mrs. Levick, who inquired very kindly after you, &c.; after which I called on the Wests, but found that Mr. West had been called suddenly away to Ismailia on Consular business—an English ship, laden with coals, having been *wrecked* in Lake Timsah! Only fancy this!

Then I went to see Mr. and Mrs. Tuck, and arranged with the former about sending messages to Mr. Gibbs. I shall try to send home news from Akaba, *via* Tor.

On my way back to the hotel I saw Captain Kellock, the Peninsular and Oriental Company's agent here, who was most polite and attentive, placing himself quite at my service, and offering to assist me in every way in his power. Certainly the Peninsular and Oriental Company's people are the most polite and obliging I ever came across: it is quite worth while to make a voyage by one of their steamers, just to see how comfortable and pleasant a voyage may be made under all circumstances, as you and I know from experience. If the weather is bad for landing, or anything of the kind, like it was when we arrived at Alexandria in the 'Simla,' the captain is equal to the occasion, and makes everything as comfortable as possible under the circumstances; if it is fine weather and very hot, they are equally ready to render everything agreeable and cool. Besides, they are not only the most liberal company concerning their passengers, but are ever ready to afford independent travellers every courtesy, and the benefit of the various means at their disposal: so that, in fact,

they ought to be called the "Philanthropic and Obliging."

After luncheon I was thinking of going off on a donkey to the dock, but while I was thinking about it, I was told that Seid Bey had returned, so Milne and I went to him. He was busy writing a letter—or having it written for him—giving instructions about my boat. He told me that it would come up to the quay this afternoon, or, at the latest, to-morrow morning. During the conversation coffee was served. Seid Bey is the most gentlemanly man amongst them; but unfortunately he speaks only Arabic, and I had a very bad interpreter, Abu Nabut having gone to look after the camels, which are to arrive here from Cairo this afternoon. By and by, Mohammed Pasha returned in his boat. He has given all necessary orders; the steamer is being coaled, and will be here to-morrow morning early without fail. So I suppose all is right. If I can I shall start to-morrow; but I fear I shall be disappointed. The weather is perfectly lovely. Suez is frightfully dull, having gone down considerably since the canal was opened. Last night, our bedroom being filled with the luggage of us all three, I stumbled over Colonel Morrieson's bag, and struck my knee against his portmanteau. It hurt me a

good deal at first, but I don't think any great harm is done. My cough is gradually leaving me, as I expected it would with change of air.

The camels are come and I must go down to see them. On going down I found the captain and engineer of the steamer, who had come to receive my orders. The steamer is coaled, and will be here the first thing in the morning. She will not be able to start, however, till Saturday morning, as the crew have to provide themselves with food, and the tide will not serve till the next morning, Saturday; when, please God, we are to start, and in four days we are to be at Akaba. The Captain is a Maltese, as are also most of the crew; the engineer is an Englishman. We shall fly the *British* flag. The pilot is an Arab, who knows the sea well, and we shall steam only during the day, anchoring at night: the Captain has good charts, so there is nothing to fear. The 'Erin' is sixty-five tons, and a screw. Altogether everything promises most favourably.

The camels have unloaded in the yard of the hotel, and will go on to-morrow. We shall, I trust, be at Akaba three or four days before them, in which time I hope to have done good business, so as to be able to report favourably before the departure of

the Captain for Tor, to which place I shall send a letter for you, and also one for Mr. Gibbs. I have spoken with Captain Kellock, and also with Mr. Edwards, the P. and O. Company's chief clerk, who are both most kind and obliging. Instead of dining in the hotel, I went and had a "Manchester tea" with our friends the Levicks, who are exceedingly kind, and will do everything to help me as regards letters. Mrs. Levick was particular in her inquiries, and spoke much of you.

January 16,—7 A.M.—A lovely morning. No signs of the 'Erin' yet. It will not be high water till 9.30. I have been thinking over our journey, and about its commencing at Akaba; but, in point of fact, it begins here at Suez. What a pity it is I did not know I should have the steamer before I made my arrangements, and signed the contract with Abu Nabut, as it would have saved me a good deal of useless expenses, and the funds of the expedition being crippled. You must, however, apply to the public for further assistance, and I must leave the matter in your hands. I shall want money when I return to Egypt.

Colonel Morrieson has now got a separate bedroom, so Milne came into my room last night. It is very cold during the night: the seasons here have

changed a good deal since the canal was opened, it being generally much cooler than formerly. Abu Nabut has just been to me for a written request to the *chef du pont* over the canal, to let my camels pass. So they are off, thank God.

9 A.M.—The 'Erin' has arrived and is moored nearly opposite the hotel. She is a nice little boat, but small. The Captain's name is Emmanuele Chiassaro, or Sciassar (pronounced in English Shassàr), which is the Genoese form of the name, he being of Genoese parentage. He tells me that he cannot start before Saturday night, or Sunday morning, on account of the crew being without their pay. He has been to the Governor about it; but it is Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, and no work is done. To-morrow he will telegraph to Cairo, and all will be right. I doubt it much!

I went with Captain Sciassar to the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Office, and got a British flag. The crew consists of captain (Maltese), mate (Maltese), pilot (Arab), chief engineer (Maltese), second engineer (Maltese), four men (Maltese), and two stokers (Egyptian). The 'Erin' goes eight to eight and a half knots per hour. She has orders to go with me wherever I please, so instead of stopping at Sherm, near Ras Mohammed, to look at

some volcanoes there, which are only interesting in a geological point of view, I have told the Captain I will stop at Ayoun el Kassab,[1] on the other side of the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba, which place I have hitherto identified with the "Encampment of the Israelites by the Red Sea."

About eleven o'clock this morning, Captain Foster came to me to say there is a "hitch." The Captain and crew are in arrears of pay, and cannot (or will not) go to sea unless paid! Foster has been to Mohammed Pasha, and got snubbed! It is a question between his department and that of McKillop Bey and the Egyptian Government. Unless strong measures are taken, I may be delayed an indefinite period! This is pleasant. I went off with him to the Egyptian Telegraph Office, and telegraphed to Nubar Pasha; and Foster is gone to the English Telegraph Office, to telegraph direct to McKillop at Alexandria. As things now are there is no knowing when I may start; and the camels are gone on, so I am in a hole! Where the expenses are to end I know not.

Captain Sciassar has been with me to say that Mohammed Pasha has given him orders to leave with me directly, to cross over to the arsenal, and

[1] See Dr. Beke's "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 36.

take on board five tons more of coal, then to proceed with me to Akaba, and after I have dismissed him, to go on to Massowah *direct* without coming round to Tor for coal. The Pasha is leaving this evening for Cairo. But now comes the hitch. The crew are willing to go without being paid up their wages, but they must have food for a month, during which they may be on their voyage to Massowah: they cannot go without. I have been thinking over the matter, and have agreed with Colonel Morrieson that it would be *cheaper* for me to advance them the money, even on the chance of getting it back than be delayed here. So I told the Captain I would give him the money if Captain Foster said it was all right. Whereupon he went to Captain Foster, and brought him to me. I told him I would advance the money on the skipper's receipt, and this I would send to Nubar Pasha, requesting the amount to be paid to Messrs. Oppenheim for me, explaining that I did it for the credit of the Khédive as well as myself, and also to avoid difficulties; for the crew being British subjects, the Egyptian Government have no direct control over them, and besides, could not in any court force them to fulfil their engagement, so long as the Egyptian Government does not fulfil its part.

The Gordian knot was cut by the following telegram from McKillop Bey, in reply to Captain Foster's: "Pay the 'Erin's' crew one month's wages." But how to get the money from the harbour-master's treasurer or cashier, to-day being Friday? Foster is gone off for this: he is a capital fellow. Before leaving he told me of another hitch. The English engineer, hearing that the steamer is not coming back to Suez, refuses to go! so the Captain and Foster Bey have gone to find another. But, perhaps when the Englishman sees the order for the pay, he may think better of it. A nice country this in which to be dependent on the Government!

January 17.—Yesterday I went and took a Manchester tea with Mr. Andrews; afterwards Colonel Morrieson and Milne came in. We passed a very pleasant evening talking about Sinai, &c. He has all the books on the *traditional Mountain*, and on the Holy Land. He sees a good deal in what I say; but, like many others, cannot be quite convinced. Whilst there, I had a visit from two of the officials, McKillop's cashier and another. They told me the money will be paid, and I am to be off *to-day*. The engineer is displaced; the second supersedes him, and a new second engineer is to be shipped:

so far so good. I write this in the morning, having just gone out to look about me.

The *schooner* is getting up steam with all her might, and is to come alongside of the quay to ship my things; but the Captain is not on board, and I believe nothing till I see it. I find I was wrong in describing the rig of the 'Erin.' She is a schooner, with the addition of what appears to be a large lateen sail on the foremast. The screw is *auxiliary*. Under steam she goes eight knots, but under sail she can make twelve knots: in fact, she is said to be a clipper. At sea we shall keep *within* the reefs; that is, close along the shore; so that we shall not be exposed to a heavy sea, and besides can always run in when the weather looks at all nasty. Trust to an *Arab* pilot for taking care of *himself*, to say nothing of his ship.

8.30.—The British flag is flying at the masthead of the 'Erin.' She will not come up to the quay, as there is not water enough; so she remains where she was, and the things are being taken on board. I have seen Captain Sciassar, who has received *some* money, but not all. The English engineer, Clifton, did not properly belong to the vessel. The second, now first, is a Maltese, who has been four years with Sciassar. The 'Erin' is now going over to the arsenal to

take her coals on board, and then will come for me. I am going to breakfast, and then over to Mr. Tuck to telegraph to you. All this looks like business.

On going out to call on Consul West, who, I hear has returned, I saw the Captain again, who reported himself ready to depart, only he was waiting for a telegram from Cairo to say whether he was to go to Massowah *or return here.* Just fancy these people! It is clear we shall anyhow be too late for to-day; so to-morrow morning, Inshallah! at seven o'clock we are to be off. This delay is killing me with anxiety, but what am I to do? I may mention here at once, as I am going to write on a different subject, that when I returned to the hotel at twelve o'clock, the steamer, which went off to the arsenal for the five tons of coal, had not returned. She looked very pretty as she steamed down the creek. Captain Foster called here in my absence to say that the 'Erin' is waiting the orders of Mohammed Pasha, and will not leave till she receives them. They are expected by telegraph, and will be directed to him at the harbour, whither he has now gone. What is to be the end of it all, I cannot form an idea. If I do not know soon, I shall telegraph to Nubar Pasha again, and shall continue doing so till I am really off. I have put the pos-

tage stamp on my letter to you, and shall leave it with Mr. Levick to state the precise moment of my departure on the outside of the envelope; so that when you get my letter you will know I am *really off*—unless! But I have no heart to write about it.

The post from Cairo this evening will most probably bring me your letter by the Brindisi mail, which arrived at Alexandria on Thursday evening. I much desired to have it, and yet did not venture to incur the delay and expense of stopping merely for this, as I have not reason to expect any intelligence from you affecting my journey, and my stopping here for more news would simply be delaying my return home to you in person just as long. As it is, duty and inclination go together, for I *must* wait. Mr. Levick is very good, and will get your letter from the *Egyptian* post-office as soon as it arrives. I called on Mr. and Mrs. West, who were glad to see me, and invited me to dinner to-day if *I do not go!*

3 P.M.—The 'Erin' is back with her coal, and there she sticks. The Captain is away, and I am ——; whilst I am writing in he comes with his bill of health in order. He only awaits the telegram, which ought to arrive *now*. I am still afraid, but I take it for granted, and have ordered him to

light the fires at six o'clock to-morrow morning, so that we may be off at eight o'clock. I might have made it an hour earlier, but Mr. Levick tells me there is just the chance of your letter arriving too late from Cairo to be delivered before the morning, and I am certainly not going to throw away the chance for a mere hour. Captain Sciassar seems a straightforward fellow enough—at all events, for a Maltese!—and has navigated the Red Sea for four years as pilot, master, and commander.

I waited till six o'clock for Captain Sciassar, but he never came; so after "blowing up" a little to Abu Nabut, I said I should go to the Consul. I was to dine with him at half-past six, but thought I would go a little beforehand to consult with Mr. West as to what had best be done. I had in the course of the afternoon looked in on Mr. Levick, who gave me little hope; he would not take leave of me, saying I was sure to remain.

When I arrived Mr. West was busy for a while, and then began entering into my case: but hardly had he done so, when a man he knew, connected with the Government, came with the telegram from Cairo, ordering Sciassar to land me at Akaba, *and then return to Suez*, instead of going to Massowah. However, I am to start at once; there is nothing

now to prevent me. I dined with the Wests; Mr. and Mrs. Tuck being of the party. At about nine o'clock your letter of the fifth, *via* Marseilles, was brought me. There is nothing particular in it that requires special notice. I am about to start on an arduous undertaking, but yet I do so in perfect confidence and reliance on His blessing and protection.

January 18.—It is just seven o'clock, and I really do believe we are going at last. I got up soon after six, and after packing up my things, I have been down to the schooner. I had seen the smoke from my window as soon as I was out of bed. No one was on deck, so I called out lustily, 'Erin, ahoy!' which brought some one up. The Captain is on shore at the *locanda*, where he is staying. The steam will be up in a quarter of an hour. I take for granted that all is right, and so I came home to breakfast, to close my letter to you, to pay my bill, and be off.

Post Office, 7.45.—I have just seen the Captain. All is ready. We are to start in a quarter of an hour, *or as soon as the tide will permit*, which may make it a little later, he says. But we are really off; so I have sent for our things to be taken on board, and I now leave my letter with Mr.

Levick for you. God Almighty bless us both, and prosper my undertaking.

At Sea, January 18.—As the 'Erin' returns to Suez, I shall send you not only the latest news, but also my diary as heretofore. My notes will require a great deal of extension before they are ready for publication, and you might help me considerably in this. At eight o'clock I went on board the 'Erin' for the *first time.* Colonel Morrieson, who had got up to see us off, came on board with us, shook me heartily by the hand, and wished me all success. But he had little time given him. The Captain came up to me immediately and asked if we should start, to which I assented, and he took me so sharply at my word, that Colonel Morrieson had to scramble out of the ship as best he could. By five minutes past eight we were clear. It is a lovely morning, bright and clear, with very little wind; what there is, is from the north-east. We begin our voyage with the new moon, and by the time this moon is out, I hope to have completed all the observations I require to make, and to be *nearly* back at Suez; so that I shall literally be able to fulfil my contract with Mr. Milne, that he is to be back in England by the end of February. I shall unavoidably be a little

later, but not much, I trust. Our journey to Harran, if I recollect rightly, occupied three months and a week. In that time, from December the 8th, the day of my departure, I ought to be back with you.

The 'Erin' is a very nice little vessel, and was originally a pleasure yacht. I was mistaken about her sails. She is regularly schooner-rigged, with the addition of an immense square sail on her foremast; this is what I thought to be a lateen sail, from the way in which it was braced to the mast when in harbour. She is nominally of eighteen horse power, but works twenty, so says the Captain, and she consumes as much as one ton of coal a day: with twenty tons on board, therefore, she has fuel for just a three weeks' cruise.

Our voyage so far has been nothing remarkable. We passed the entrance to the Suez Canal; but of course could not see anything of it, except that there, and at the entrance to the harbour, there are most extensive works. There were several vessels of the P. and O. Company and others, lying there, and also three vessels of the Khédive. He might have given me one of these; but our Captain says they are none of them fit for the voyage, their Captains being incompetent. After a while I had

the case of instruments from the Royal Geographical Society brought up and opened, and I took out the binocular glass and pocket compass for use. The glass is an excellent one. At 9.20 we passed the 'Zenobia' light ship, which Captain Sciassar says he placed there about a fortnight ago. The P. and O. mail-ship from Aden had just passed us, and the 'Zenobia' had the Company's flag flying, which she took down before we came up. As we had our flag flying, she might have saluted it, *only she did not.*

Being a good deal excited with my morning's work, and having slept but little during the night, I went below and lay myself down on the couch. The cabin is small but not nearly so bad as Milne represented to me: it has a couch along each side, which serves as a bed: there is a port-hole on either side, and a sort of skylight in the middle, so that there is plenty of ventilation. I slept till eleven o'clock, when I went on deck again. Things were now getting a little ship-shape; awnings were being rigged fore and aft: the jib was set, but there was no wind to fill it; and by and by they shook out the great big square sail, though to very little effect, except towards evening, when the wind began to freshen. We have two boats, one of which is towed behind.

Luncheon was served at twelve o'clock. Whilst we were having it, the Captain was observing the sun, and came *and reported to me* that it was twelve o'clock, to which I touched my hat; I had hardly the conscience to tell him *to "make it so:"* but I suppose I ought, as I am in fact in command of the ship, and Sciassar is only sailing master.

Abu Nabut has been repeating to us the *Legend of the Korân* respecting Mount Sinai.[1] I have a notion that the *Jebel-en-Nûr* story is taken from this source, but we shall see. At all events, it gives me a new idea. Somehow or other this Jebel-en-Nûr has in my mind an importance, which I know not how to account for.

Our lunch was set out in regular dragoman form. We had boiled fowl and mutton together; then red currant jam, cheese, oranges, apples, and dates; winding up with a cup of coffee. In the afternoon the Captain came to me with a bad finger, he told me he had had the tips of two of his fingers cut off by an accident, and was in the hospital for some time, and came out well, after a fashion. The nail of one had grown long and round the stump, and had got pulled off, which had wretchedly inflamed the finger; altogether it was a very ugly affair.

[1] See Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," Appendix C.

He had had some camphor water given him to bathe it with, but mere bathing is of no use; so I got out my "medicine *chest*," when the first things I laid my hand on were lint and oiled silk; a piece of the former wetted with his camphor water, and covered over with a piece of the latter, served as a poultice, and a bandage over this put it all in order.

The afternoon was passed in *dolce fàr nìente* on my part, chatting, looking about, and half dozing on a divan on deck made of our tents. Milne amused himself by sketching the hind part of the ship, and then took my portrait and that of Abu Nabut. Mine is really not so very, very bad; you would know it to be me, *if you were told so.*

Our old pilot tells me he was up the Gulf of Suez in 1871–72 with the 'Shearwater,' my good friend Captain Washington's old ship, and knows every part of it well. He wanted to anchor to-day at 4.15 P.M., but the skipper said that *here he* is pilot, and he knew we could reach the next anchorage. We therefore went on, the wind freshening and giving us a helping hand, so that by six o'clock, half an hour after sunset, we were safely anchored off Hammâm Fir'ôn—the Bath of Pharaoh. A native boat was already lying there at anchor; she

has come from Suez to buy wood and charcoal of the Beduins. Where the latter get these articles it is not easy to say; but this shows how the country is rendered barren and desert by the destruction of its vegetation.

As it was rather cold, we went below to have our dinner, the table being placed across from couch to couch, and we eating in a half-reclining posture, picnic fashion. When we came on deck again, the main awning (its sides) had been lowered so as to form a tent, and the wind having fallen, it was very jolly and comfortable; then I had a chat with the Captain, the crew lying about in respectful silence. He is a very well-informed man; and in speaking of Malta, he expressed himself decidedly opposed to the tradition which says that St. Paul landed there. The real island was *Maleda* in the Adriatic; but Melita or Malta was chosen *because it is a bigger island.* This is precisely what I say, in "Origines Biblicæ," respecting the origin of the erroneous Jewish traditions.

At nine o'clock we had a cup of tea, Milne and I, the Captain having one with us "at my command," as he said, when I asked him to join us, and then we turned in. Abu Nabut has supplied us with plenty of thick covering for the desert, but here we

had to turn off one-half of it: our mattresses we did not want at all, as the ship's couches were sufficient. Captain Sciassar tells me he has on board a full supply of bedding, &c., for the use of Munzinger Pasha: he is really a Pasha, he says.

January 19.—Started at 5.30 A.M. I lay in bed till just nine o'clock, when I came on deck, where we breakfasted. A delightfully still sea, with a nice breeze, just sufficient to fill the jib and foresail. I have employed myself in writing up my log thus far, and Milne in "painting" the man at the helm. The pilot, named Ramadhan, sits day and night in the bow of the ship by himself, looking constantly forward: when he sees reason to alter the ship's course, he rises up, and motions with his hand which way the helmsman is to go. His life cannot be a very lively one; but he is so accustomed to it that conversation seems rather an annoyance than otherwise. Captain Nares [now Sir G. S.], R.N., in 1871–72, when surveying the Gulf of Suez and the Egyptian coast, did not then go into the Gulf of Akaba, I believe. When I told Ramadhan that Captain Nares's survey was in the "Red Sea Pilot"—the new edition of the "Sailing Directions"—he was rather more animated than usual, and asked

whether *he* was named. He is paid seven francs a day for his work by the Government.

Our cabin is forward, then comes a tank capable of holding eleven tons of water, with which Captain McKillop used to supply vessels in the roads; but which tank is now filled with coal: then comes the regular coal hold and the engines. The cook's galley is aft, and Abu Nabut is generally there; but when wanted, he comes forward and discourses most learnedly on all the places we are passing, pointing out this, and that, and the other, as they are all laid down by the Ordnance Survey; as Mr. Poulett Scrope sarcastically says, on the map of the Peninsula, which is more exactly drawn than the map of the county of Surrey.

No observing the sun to-day. The Captain, like the rest, is an idler. The weather is lovely, the sea has scarcely a ripple upon it; but there is a nice breeze, only unfortunately it is from the south, so that it is against us, and as the current is also contrary, we do not go on so fast as I could wish. To-night we anchor at Tor; to-morrow at Aiyūnah (Ayoun el Kassab),[1] on the east side of the Gulf of Akaba. Milne says he enjoys this "travelling in the *desert;*" and he may well do so. He has

[1] See Burckhardt's "Travels in Arabia," p. 430.

nothing to do, sees something fresh and of importance every hour almost, enjoys himself to his heart's content, and has no expenses. But, my dearest Milly, you would really have liked it too. Except just at last, and then only for a moment as it were, we had a lovely passage from Venice to Alexandria; and here it is as smooth as if one were on the Thames; and this south wind blowing will be all the better for the Gulf of Akaba, for entering which Captain Sciassar says this is just the proper season. So all will go well, please God!

As Master Ramadhan now says he cannot fetch Tor before dark, and it would be dangerous to enter then, he has stopped at 4.30 P.M. for the night, at a place just opposite the Ras Gharib Lighthouse, which is on the west side of the Gulf. They say it is twenty miles north of Tor, but it must be more. (I do not write very steadily on board ship, but I hope you will be able to make it out.) The crew set to work fishing, but caught only two small fish, though plenty of large ones were visible.

Mr. Milne went on shore with the Captain, our servant, Hashim, and one man to row. Milne and Hashim went up the land, whilst the Captain and his man collected shells on the shore. The former

found the distance much greater than they expected, and were not back till dark. We whistled for them to return, and then, as it was cold, I went below. They came on board at half-past six. Milne had a pocketful of specimens, which were to be examined in the morning. We dined below, and then came up into the "tent" to chat and have tea, and at nine o'clock we turned in.

January 20.—Off at 5.30. We did not get up till eight o'clock, when we came on deck to breakfast. It was quite still and calm, the sky overcast, and the sea like a sheet of glass, or rather *oil*. After breakfast we prepared to examine our specimens, when we found to our surprise and vexation that the boy Giosé (Guiseppe) had thrown them overboard! One specimen alone was preserved, Milne having taken it below with him. It is a sandstone, *beginning to be formed* by drifts of sand apparently consolidated by calcareous matter, or perhaps simply by the rain, or the moisture of the atmosphere. It is in layers, each of which had evidently become hard before the next was laid upon it. I noticed them when I passed along here from Tor in 1843, when I saw the footmarks of wild ducks *fixed* on the surface, which being afterwards covered with another sand-drift, would remain in perpetuity. Notwithstanding the loss of his

specimens, Milne made a few notes, which will serve me to bring in the subject of the geological formation of the pseudo Mount Sinai.[1] Inshallah! we will make a useful book yet. There is no chance of our being at Aiyūnah to-night, and we shall be lucky if we get out of the Gulf of Suez.

At 11 A.M. we anchored at Tor. Our flag was hoisted, which was answered from the Governor's house. The Governor came at once on board, accompanied by several persons. The usual inquiries were made, and our bill of health shown. He is a quiet, civil, middle-aged man, who made the usual compliments, and placed himself and all about him at my service, &c. We told him we wanted nothing but to buy some meat for the crew, and some charcoal for ourselves! For this purpose the Captain and Abu Nabut went on shore in the Governor's boat, and Milne accompanied them. I remained on board and copied out his geological notes of last night, as they will be required to work into my book. We are here at the foot of the pseudo Mount Sinai.

Tor[2] is situated at the edge of a broad and slightly undulating plain, running back to a granitic range of hills, the highest of which is Serbal. The

[1] See Appendix A.

[2] See Dr. Fraas's description of Tor, and account of the coral formations in the northern parts of the Red Sea, in his "Aus dem Orient" (Stuttgart, 1867), p. 184.

houses are built of coral, obtained from a mound on the north side of the town, which on the side facing the sea forms a small cliff. There are many shells with the coral, which appears to be in detached masses. If not left there by the sea, they must have been drifted into the mound-shape form they now make, the latter is the more probable. The mound or mounds are about twenty feet high—higher than the highest houses in the village. The people of Tor are Greek Christians, dependent on the convent on (the tourists') Mount Sinai.

At *noon* the boat came back, and we instantly weighed anchor and were off. The orders to the engineer are given in "English," such as, "Torn astarn," &c. Our crew had purchased a pig and some dried fish for the voyage. Mr. Milne made a rapid sketch of the place, sufficient for a picture. After luncheon we docketed several shells he had brought from a mound some twenty feet above high-water level, which had evidently been washed up by the sea.

In the afternoon the wind freshened, and as we are approaching the most difficult part of the sea, there was a talk of stopping. The Captain and ourselves remonstrated, but the pilot said that it was more than his head was worth to go on, and

if the Captain chose to do it, it must be on his own responsibility. This shut us up; and so at 3.40 we cast anchor again in a sort of bay a little above Ras Sybille. The Ashrafi Lighthouse on the Egyptian side is distinctly visible. What a blessing these lighthouses are along the coast!

Soon after we had anchored, a native came alongside in a small canoe, which he paddled, bringing for sale some large oysters, of the sort that the Americans say it requires three men to swallow one at a mouthful. These are real whoppers! eight or ten inches long.[1] The Captain bought four for half a franc as food for the crew; they make an excellent dish cooked with rice. He says that no *frutti di mare* (shellfish) is poisonous: for sailors find everything to be "very good eating." We passed our time reading, writing, and drawing —the latter being my companion's work, and he has already "painted" me three times! It was a delightful mild evening, with little wind, and that from the *south*, which is my only consolation for being so long on the voyage, as I trust it will con-

[1] These big oysters, Mr. Milne tells me, are *Tridacua gigantea* (the largest bivalve), and have been seen one yard and a half long. In the Church of St. Sulpice, at Paris, the shells are used as fonts. There are some magnificent specimens in the garden of the hotel at South Kensington Museum.

tinue in the Gulf of Akaba. At night we had the moon, not very large as yet, but she will get bigger every night. It was so mild that we had our dinner on deck by lamplight, and we sat reading till we went to bed. Milne is translating Dr. Loth's account of the Harras of Arabia, and I was reading Macaulay's Biographical Essays.

January 21.—Left our anchorage at 6 A.M. The pilot would not start till it was light, and he is not to be blamed, for the shoals and reefs about here are tremendous: we had to stand well out, to keep clear of them. Before starting, the Captain bought nineteen more oysters for one franc of the same man, who came off to us at daybreak. Thus the crew will not starve. Captain Sciassar is an active, good-natured fellow, always doing something, helping in cooking occasionally, &c.; but unfortunately he keeps his ship in a filthy state. It is true the boy sweeps the deck, but as to putting water on it, there is no more than they put to their faces! It is rather a "piggish" life we are leading. The pilot is mostly squatted down at the bow of the ship; but when the sail is set, he climbs up and stands on the yard looking earnestly forward, and giving his commands to the steersman, either with his hands, or by the words "*burra*"—

"outwards," "*djowa*"—"inwards." He needs no charts, no observations, scarcely any bearings, but looks *into* the sea!

The wind is now *south-east.* Oh, if it would only continue so in the Gulf of Akaba! This morning I have been acting quite like a *deus ex machinâ.* One of the sailors having lost the key of his watch, I recollected that I had an old one in my writing-desk, which was found exactly to fit; so I gave it to him. By and by the Captain dropped his tobacco-box overboard. The ship was stopped, and the boat begun to be lowered; but it was seen to be of no use, so we went on. The poor man was *au désespoir.* I found a remedy for this misfortune likewise. At Cairo, seeing all the world smoking cigarettes which they made for themselves, I thought I would do the same. So I took lessons of Mr. Rogers, and also at the tobacconist's, and then ventured to buy a pouch of tobacco with some cigarette papers; but I soon found "the game not worth the candle," and therefore purchased some ready-made cigarettes for the journey. The pouch, which I had laid aside, now came in seasonably as a present to the Captain. I need not say that he was delighted.

We are now nearing Ras Mohammed, which lies

very low. I had fancied it must be very high! The Captain observed the sun to-day, and at twelve o'clock reported it to me, and on my bowing, he opened the steam-whistle, and so struck eight bells! At 1.30 we passed something which the Captain says is the wreck of a vessel which sank there eight or ten years ago.

The granite now ceases, and low sandy (?) cliffs begin. We are taking stock of our coal, and find that out of twenty tons we have consumed seven, leaving only thirteen tons for the rest of the voyage. We have steamed thirty-eight hours in four days. In the afternoon we saw an Arab camp on the sandy coast, too far off to be very distinguishable. It is very slow work going against the wind. When we came to rounding Ras Mohammed, we hoisted the foresails, which helped us a little.

At 4.20 P.M. we passed very near under the cape, or bluff, nearly one hundred feet high, of calcareous sandstone (?), much undermined by the sea. There are two points, the westerly one being the longer and lower. The English surveyors have placed a stone on the summit of the easterly one to designate the true cape. We are now out of the Gulf of Suez; but not in that of Akaba; to do which we must first enter the Straits of Tirân. After we had rounded

the cape we found the wind not so favourable as we had anticipated: still the sails helped us a bit, and we ran on till 6.40, when we cast anchor in Sherm el Monjeh.[1] This is a small basin quite land-locked; and as we entered it, we were met by shoals of fishes, pursued, the sailors said, by a large fish which they called *cerne:* they were in such numbers and made such a noise that it sounded exactly like a heavy shower of rain: I jumped up in surprise to see what it could be, as there was no rain falling.

After dinner I sat on deck chatting with the captain and crew, to whom I related the history of the navigation of the Gulf of Akaba by the fleets of King Solomon, and Hiram, King of Tyre, of whose people, the Phœnicians (the Maltese), are the descendants. Of this there is no doubt. Their language, which is not Arabian, but Carthaginian, plainly shows this. I told them what a feather it would be in their cap to have performed this voyage with me! (I am writing on deck, and my paper blows about so, that my writing is scarcely legible.) They all seemed very delighted with what I told them.

January 22.—Milne went on shore to collect

[1] See Rüppell's description of Shŭrm, in his "Reise in Abyssinien," Bd. I., p. 142.

SHERM EL MONJEH.

To face p. 319.

specimens. (This delayed us a bit, and we did not start till 7.15 A.M.) They seem to be of sand, like Ras Mohammed. There do not appear any signs of volcanoes, but Milne did not go inland. Beyond the sand is granite. The steam being already up, we started the instant he came on board.

The Sherm in which we passed the night is a lovely little basin, protected from every wind, except towards the south-east. The hills on the east side of the harbour are formed of sand capped with two beds of yellowish limestone. The sand is yellowish red, and in places is formed of quartz grains as large as peas, being quite a grit. It contains one band of rounded and angular stones (flint, quartz, granite, &c.), about eight inches wide. These sand beds dip 17° to the south. Masses of the rock having fallen from above, protect them from the action of wind and weather. The beds above are horizontal, soft, full of irregular cavities, and, in fact, rather a mass of shells and coral than a true limestone: just as the beds below are too soft to be a sandstone. The upper bed of limestone is of a darker grey colour than the lower one, which is yellowish.[1]

We now crossed the entrance of the Gulf of

[1] See Appendix A.

Akaba, going to the north of Tirân Island. I wanted the Captain to keep on the outside, as the sea is quite free from rocks, and he felt inclined to do so ; but the pilot humbugged him, pretending that Mugna was the place I wished to go to, instead of Aiyūnah.

It is a fine morning, but the wind is getting up from the north. After breakfast we examined the specimens collected this morning by Milne, and he wrote his notes thereon, also referring to what Burckhardt says about volcanoes, of which we find no traces. The coast to our left continued sandy, with granite rising immediately above it. The wind was now dead ahead, and we shipped a good deal of water. As we proceeded, the sandy coast seemed to die out, and the granite came down to the sea. The idea that this *barren, rocky country* is the scene of the Wanderings of the Israelites is perfectly preposterous. At 11 A.M. we saw a few date-palms on the beach : but that is all the vegetation.

As it was now time for something certain to be decided about our course, there was a *kalâm* (talk) with the pilot. He wanted to persuade me that Mugna, within the gulf, was where I wanted to go. I knew what I wanted better than he did, and

showed the place to the Captain on the chart and in the "Sailing Directions," and, as he is under my orders, he had no alternative but to submit. He fears it will take time, and that he shall run out of coal, &c.; but that is not my affair. I want to go to the Encampment *by the sea* of the Israelites, as I have supposed Aiyúnah to be, and to make a drawing of it. This will serve to illustrate my book, and, besides, will perhaps save me from illustrating (and going to) Marah (Shorafà), and Elim (Moghayr Shayb), of which there are accurate descriptions by Burckhardt and Rüppell.

We then shifted our course to the eastward, set sail, and crossed behind Tirân. The wind was pretty strong, and Milne could not stand it, but went below and was very sick. I enjoyed it very much. By noon we were under the land on the east coast of the gulf, when it became quite still and delightful. The Captain says they have in the Museum at Malta a Carthagenian ship just like those that navigate the Gulf of Suez at the present day. In consequence of the stupid pilot's keeping within Tirân instead of without, he now says it is doubtful whether we shall reach Aiyúnah to-night, that is, by sunset; for he will not navigate by night. As soon as we get into an open channel, Captain

Sciassar says he will take the navigation into his own hands, and only employ the pilot when he nears the shore. I only wish he had done so this morning: it would have saved us at least ten miles, and we are only going some *five* miles an hour! The delay does not, in truth, very much signify, as I *must* remain at Akaba till the night preceding the 21st day of the moon; on which day, Saturday, February 7th, in the morning, I hope to start on my return to Suez. All my arrangements will have been previously made, so that there may not be a moment's delay after I have observed the state of the tide and of the moon on the day corresponding to the Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. I could not leave the spot without that. It was a dodge of the pilot, Ramadhan, to do as he did. Had I not been on the alert, he would have run me into Mugna (Magna), and have said he understood that was what I meant. As it is, he has subjected us to the rough passage in the morning along the coast of the Peninsula, and across to Tirân, besides making us take a course probably double of what it would have been had we kept out at sea.

The result is, that we do not reach Aiyūnah to-night, but anchor on a desert island called Barakan, some twelve miles off. The Arabian coast, along

which we skirted after crossing the straits, is low; but ahead of us are some immense mountains, marked on the chart as being 6000 and 7000 feet high; like those of Abyssinia.[1]

It is a hot day with scarcely a breath of wind, and the sea so clear that we can see the coral reefs at the bottom; ten fathoms down, they tell me. Ramadahan is so plaguy careful that he takes us first one way and then another. Poor Abu Nabut does not like the sea any more than Milne. He has no idea where we are going, and is quite shut up. He says, very naturally, that he likes best to be "at sea" on the Nile. The Captain is in a stew about coal. He says we may have enough to take us to Akaba; but how he is to get back he does not know, except by the help of the north wind. At Tor he hopes to find some coal, and he is looking out in the "Code" for the signal, "Want coal immediately," in case he should meet a steamer on his way. At Akaba he may, perhaps, be able to get some; but I doubt it. At all events, he talks of remaining there two days, which will enable me to send you letters, and, *if the news is good*, a telegram. I pray God it may be so.

[1] See Burckhardt's "Travels in Arabia" (London: Colburn, 1829), p. 340.

At 5.40 P.M. we anchored behind the island of Barakan; a low, barren, sandy rock, of the same sort as Ras Mohammed. The evening was still, with a bright moon; and a dew fell which caused the Captain to put the tent up: under it he and the crew held an animated conversation, in which I took no part, being sufficiently occupied with my thoughts. But I could not help noticing the strange mongrel language they spoke, half Punic and half Italian, and I figured to myself how the English language came to be formed by the two races Saxon and French speaking together. Sometimes the Italian predominated, and then the Punic.

January 23.—During the night the wind veered to the east, bringing what might have been a severe storm. Fortunately the wind was not strong; but there was thunder and lightning, and at five o'clock in the morning there was a large *tròmba marìna*—waterspout. I was up before seven, when the vessel was only then about to start, as the pilot could not see his way earlier. It was very overcast and threatened rain: in fact, it was raining on shore. The sky was dreadfully lowering; indeed, I think I never saw heavier masses of black clouds, not even in Abyssinia; and yet as the morning went on one could see them gradually

taken up by the sun. Still, on shore it must have rained heavily, and soon after nine o'clock we had a sprinkle even on board, but very, very slight. Fancy this in the Red Sea!

We were obliged to go slowly on account of the reefs. The pilot was up the mast looking out, and the Captain below giving the word to the steersman. The navigation here is rendered most dangerous in consequence of these reefs, of which the sea is full. At 8.45 the Captain burst out in an exclamation of admiration of the "devil" of a pilot, who had carried us clear through a passage between two of them, where there was scarcely room to pass! We were, however, not yet clear; but continued along over the reefs, which were distinctly visible, at a depth perhaps of three fathoms. At length, at 9.15 A.M., we got into deep water, fifteen or twenty fathoms.

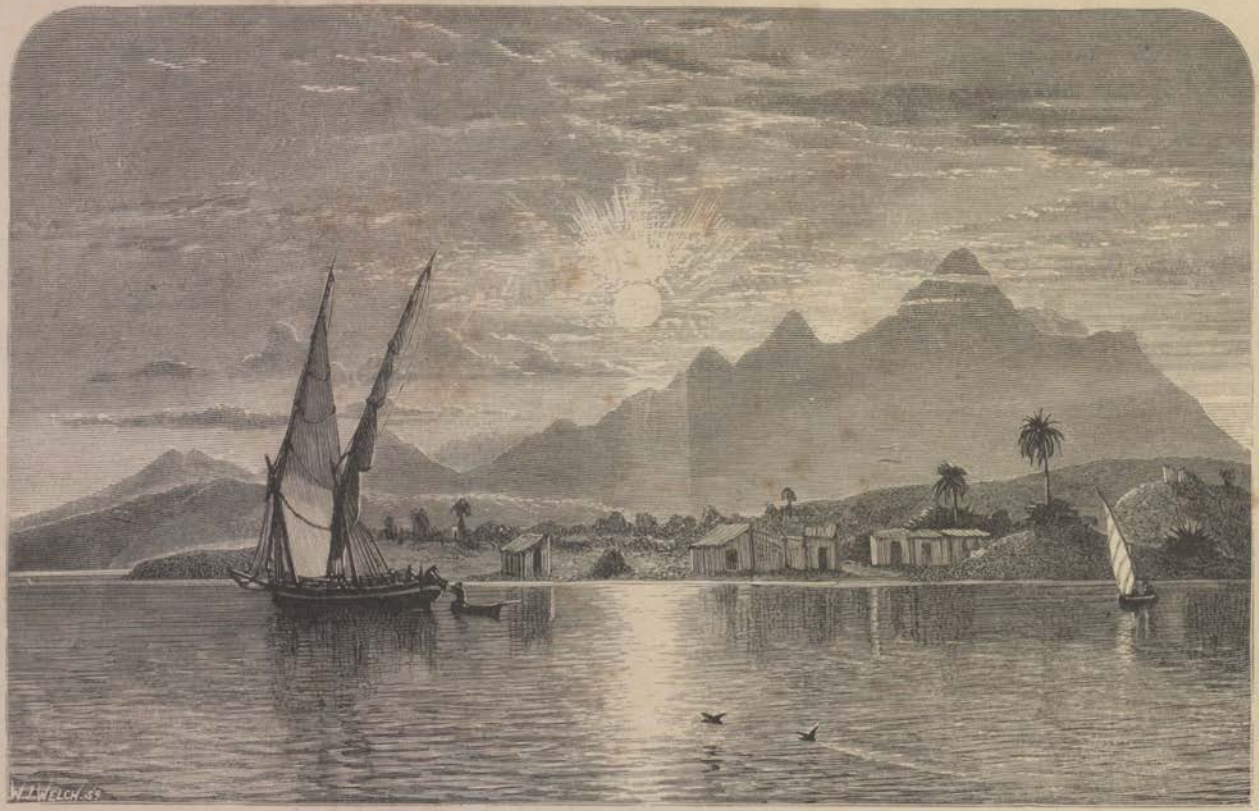
Milne employed himself in making a sketch of the black mountains above the place we are steering to, namely, Aiyúnah, but it is not very good. The weather now cleared up, and we approached the shores, on which we saw, to our surprise, a number of houses; Captain Sciassar counted twenty-four on the beach, and many more further up. We passed them on the left, and continued to the

harbour, where we saw other houses, and what appeared to be a large heap of charcoal; but not a human being was visible.

At 10.15 A.M. we anchored about a furlong from the beach, in deep water. We had previously shown the Turkish flag, and as we were in strange ports, the Captain thought it better to hoist the same also at the fore, to show that we had some one *in authority* on board: the British flag would do no good here. As soon as we had anchored, the Captain went on shore with one man, whom the rower left, and then returned for me. I landed at 10.45, being carried from the boat to the shore, a few yards only, by the men. As they dropped me on dry land, one of them exclaimed, "*Benedetta tèrra!*" and I repeated the words mentally. To me it is indeed a blessed spot, because this is *the first* of the (supposed) stations of the Israelites[1] visited by me, and you will see how admirably it answers, *in its present condition*, to the "Encampment of the Israelites," 3000 years and more ago.

At the spot where we landed were some eight or ten "houses," or, as they now turned out to be, huts made of date-palm leaves and matting. These are now all deserted, but show signs of having

[1] Numb. xxxiii. 10.



AINÚNAH (OR AYOUN EL KASSAB).

To face p. 327.

recently been occupied. In one of them was an Arab flour-mill, a water-jar from Upper Egypt, a couple of wooden cases, one bearing the mark "Burbidge, Burbidge, & Co., export druggists, Coleman Street, London;" outside was a large heap of charcoal, with two sacks full and one empty sack, and in a bush lay some woman's tresses of plaited hair. It was manifest that we had here the remains of the pilgrim caravan which passed by here on the way to Mecca some three weeks ago; and these things, including the huts, are left for them on their return. All over the plain, and up the valley, are numerous other huts, perhaps some hundred or more in all.

Milne made a drawing of the place from the ship, and then came on shore after me, and went a short distance inland, taking Hashim with him. It was high water here at 11.15 A.M., with very little rise and fall. And now occurred what proved these Maltese to be not one whit better than their Carthagenian ancestors. If I recollect rightly, Herodotus relates that Hanno did something of the same kind when he circumnavigated Africa. Being short of coal, as I have related, the Captain took possession of the two sacks of charcoal as *buòna prèsa*. On one of them were some Arabic characters, which

he *read* "Emmanuele Chiassaro," clearly showing they were intended for him. This puts me in mind of the "reading" of the Hieroglyphics by the Egyptologists. There being a quantity of firewood in one of the huts, he took a boatload of this too; altogether providing himself with enough fuel for one day's steam. The worst of it is, example is catching; and so we saw Master Hashim filling the empty sack with charcoal from the heap, which he tied up with a bit of cord left by the pilgrims "mighty convenient," and then carried it off on his back to the boat.

Unfortunately there was no water to be had except at a considerable distance from the shore, and no natives to help us with it on board; but we hope to find water to-morrow, and so the men took the water-jar on board with them, in order to have it handy they said! Altogether it was a regular case of piracy. I wonder what the pilgrims will say when they come back from Mecca. To show that he had a conscience, Captain Sciassar took three five-franc pieces out of his pocket, and hid them in the heap of charcoal; but I am afraid there was some jugglery in it, and that if any one went to look there for the money he would never find it.

I returned on board at 11.30, and as the Captain

did not wish to stay, we whistled for Milne, who came on board by noon. He had not been much more than half a mile inland, but had seen the aqueduct or canal, made for bringing water to the beach. It is built of brick, about two feet wide and some eight inches deep, along the surface of the ground, like our *Grand Canal* at Mauritius. Milne has made three pretty drawings of the place, besides that of the mountains which he made in the morning.

In the "Sailing Directions of the Red Sea," page 136, AINÚNAH is described thus—"This harbour, although its approach is formidable from the number of outlying reefs, may, with the assistance of a good pilot, be entered with facility and safety. Towards the interior, at the distance of a mile and a half from the beach, between two barren and rocky hills, is the valley of Ainúnah, celebrated among the Beduins for the purity and abundance of its water. About two miles from the beach, a long line of cliffs rises from the plain, and forms the outer edge of an extensive tract of table-land. The appearance of the luxuriant though uncultivated tract contrasts strangely with the wild sterility of the neighbouring scenery. On both sides of the valley there are some ruins, which are said to be the remains of a

Nazarene or Christian town, and from it, leading to the beach, may be seen an aqueduct by which water was formerly conveyed to a reservoir near the beach. There are still some remains of this work."

You see the name is Ainúnah. Copying Burckhardt and Rüppell, I have written Aiyūnah, Ayoun, and Aiune, which is wrong. I fancy Captain Richard Burton was here too when he went the Hadj.[1] To me this is a most interesting and important place, and I should have liked to remain here much longer; but I have done what I wanted, and now do not care to detain the vessel a single moment; indeed, my only wish now is to arrive at Akaba. As soon as Mr. Milne was on board the anchor was weighed, and we were off by 12.15 P.M. At luncheon Hashim went to the ship's tank for some water, but found none: fortunately, however, Abu Nabut had some in a barrel, intended for the desert. If I had known what I *now* know, I would have insisted on stopping a couple of hours more at Ainúnah, to look about the place whilst the sailors fetched water; but it is too late to complain now.[2]

[1] He does not appear to make any mention of Ainúnah, or Maghara Sho'eib, in his "Mecca." He left them N.E. of his course.

[2] Captain Burton will probably give some interesting particulars of Ainúnah in his forthcoming work—see page 69.

We now went westward along the coast, a fresh wind blowing W.S.W.—you see how it changes—which makes the sea a little rough, and difficult for me to write. We kept at a distance from the coast, and at 2.45 P.M. passed three small native craft close inshore. Soon after this we passed within a few fathoms of a rock just under water. Ramadhan luckily has sharp eyes! Had we struck it, going at the rate we did, we should assuredly have gone to the bottom. The navigation being very difficult, and it not being possible to find an anchorage later on, we cast anchor at 3 P.M. in shallow water over a coral reef, and behind a shoal now above water. The position is in about 28° N. and 34.50′ E.—not at all a pleasant place to stop; but they say it is quite safe. As we were to come such a very little way, why might we not just as well have remained two hours longer at Ainúnah. Confound that Ramadhan! The Captain and crew are busy fishing, and I am writing; but you see what a bad place it is for it, the wind almost blows my paper away.

I find that we are only in 35° instead of 34° 50′ E., so that we are ten miles short of what I imagined. We shall *never* get to Akaba at this rate; and the camels are there waiting for me. It

is dreadfully unfortunate: and yet I ought not to complain. All will be right, if I can only get a start. The wind got up so much that we were obliged to let go a second anchor; that is to say, it was deemed prudent to do so. Milne is a regular Job's comforter. He compares our position to anchoring in the middle of the Atlantic. I asked him if he ever did so? when he began relating some of his experiences, and of their having lost three persons by sickness out of nine hundred in an emigrant vessel, and buried them without most of the other passengers knowing it. And then he went on speculating on what would become of us if we parted from our anchor, saying (as is quite true) that the strength of a cable is dependent on that of every single link being sufficient to nullify the strength of all the rest. Confound the fellow! he makes one feel quite nervous.

The "tent" being set up for the night, the Captain and crew assembled round the lantern, and began telling stories. As I was in the circle, the Captain suggested that he should tell his story in Italian, to which Giosé, the boy, replied, that then *he* would not understand it. This was, of course, sufficient reason for me to beg that I might not be taken into account, and so the Captain and the cook spun a

long yarn, of the purport of which I can form no idea. But I noticed the constant repetition of familiar Italian expressions, such as "in somma," which I take to mean much the same as our "and so." Master Giosé is the pet of the ship's company: he is a smart, active boy of eleven, whose first voyage this is. He knows only Maltese, and is very much afraid his father and brother, the one speaking English and the other Italian, will forget their Maltese, and then, he says, how will they be able to speak to him? His brother Mariano is only twenty-one, and he is the engineer!

January 24.—During the night it blew great guns—"fulmine di vènto," to use the Captain's expression. After midnight it became calmer, and on my going upon deck to look about me, I found it a beautiful starlight night: the moon had already set. We started at 6.45 A.M. Although I was not exactly frightened by what was said about the ugliness of our position last night, I thought it quite as well to be prepared for anything that might happen, and therefore I did not undress, only taking off my coat and undoing my necktie. This morning there was no washing for want of water, so that we are getting more and more "piggish," and, I fear, shall continue so till we get to Akaba. In case of

need, the engine can make some ten gallons of condensed water per diem. The wind was now from the north, which not being altogether unfavourable, we hoisted sail, and went on pretty well. About breakfast time a little rain fell: there must be a good deal on the mountains at times.

We bore straight for the island of Tirân; and at 11.20 A.M. altered our course so as to enter the Gulf of Akaba. At 12.30 P.M. we rounded Ras Fartak and entered the gulf. The wind was now nearly ahead, but it was not very strong, nor was the sea very rough: still it was rough enough to cause us to ship a good deal of water, which wetted Abu Nabut's tents, bedding, &c., which are on deck. These had, consequently, to be shifted, and spars placed under them to keep them from the deck. The Captain is very obliging and handy, taking part in all the operations of the crew, to whom he is, as it were, a father.

No one, I believe, has been in these waters since the time of the surveying-ship 'Palinurus,' in 1830–34. The Captain tells me he has three letters which were given to him by the Admiral before leaving Suez, for delivery at Akaba. He does not know their purport. Taking this fact and other matters into consideration, I have thought it better

that we should not hoist British colours on our arrival. It would be merely a piece of national vanity, and could do me no good; whereas it might possibly do me harm, especially in connection with the difference between England and Turkey in the south of Arabia.[1] So I suggested this to the Captain, who quite approved of my determination. By keeping himself strictly to his character of an Egyptian officer, and his ship one of the Egyptian Navy, he pays no port dues, and is not subject to quarantine regulations. So it was at Tor, and so it will be at Akaba. My flag is therefore put aside, to be returned to Captain Kellock at Suez.

When once we had got into the gulf we were in deep water, and a course of about N.N.E. being set, we continued along the Arabian coast, the pilot leaving his post, and the Captain going to sleep. And this is the terrific Gulf of Akaba one hears so much about! But we must not cry before we are out of the wood: we have yet to see how we like it. We kept along *close* to the shore as it seemed; but everything is on *so gigantic a scale*, and there being nothing by which we could calculate distances or heights, that Milne and I made an egregious mistake. After luncheon, while looking at the

[1] Should Egypt accept the *sole* Protectorate of England, or become independent, it will have to be decided to which country Akaba rightly belongs.

mountains, Milne asked me what I thought their height was. He estimated them, he said, about 300 or 400 feet. I said, without paying much attention, that I thought they were at least 300 feet; but such things were so deceptive that we had better ask the Captain. We did so; and he made a rough observation and calculation, from which he deduced a height of 2700 feet—and this (he said) at the very least! Captain Sciassar told us we were distant three quarters of a mile from the shore; but I had estimated it at a quarter of a mile, or even less! It requires great practice to form just estimates in such matters, where everything is on so immense a scale, and there is nothing—no trees, no houses, no people—with which to compare what we see. The mountains appear to be composed of sandstone, and behind them is what seems to be granite. As we proceed (about 4 o'clock), the granite comes forward to the coast, but it is doubtful whether it is granite, or if so, it must be much disintegrated on the surface. At 5 P.M. we saw what is called a *wind dog* over the mountains ahead—a short rainbow, which is a sure sign of wind.

At 5.40 we came to *Măgna* (Mugna) in 28° 23′ 30″ N. lat., where the pilot said we should get water. In lowering the anchor no stop was put on the cable, and so it ran out! A nice piece of lubberly

seamanship. This caused a great deal of confusion : the other anchor was cast, but before this was properly secured the vessel was moved backwards and forwards as if to keep her near the spot where the other was lost. This place is a vast improvement on Aïnúnah, there being up the valley a perfect wood of date trees, and a number of huts along the shore. There appear to be a few natives, but not at all in proportion to the number of dwellings : six men soon made their appearance on the beach, with whom we endeavoured to communicate as well as the wind would allow us. "*Hat moiyeh ! Hat moiyeh ! Hat moiyeh !*" was our cry ; we are without water, and dying of thirst. Then some attempts were made to tell them who and what we were ; and Abu Nabut "explained" that the Khédive's Hakim (doctor) was on board ! On my remonstrating with him on this, he answered me, as Mikhail did when we were in the valley of the Jordan, that it was his affair, and not mine ; at which I laughed, and said that as I had already passed in Syria for the Hakim Bashi of the Sultan, it was but a little thing to be the Hakim of the Khédive !

Meantime the boat had been lowered to look for the anchor, which they appear to have found, and which is to be fished for to-morrow morning by

Ramadhan, who is a good diver, when the sun is up sufficiently high for him to see the bottom. The boat then went on shore and brought off a Beduin, a youngish, good-looking man, dressed in a striped abba, who by "lamp light" looked very bright and picturesque in his Arab dress. After the usual salutations he squatted on the deck in front of me with Abu Nabut before him, and a long conversation ensued. He is not the Sheikh, but only one of a few of the tribe who remain here to attend to the fructification of the dates, which, like the *aucubas*, have male and female trees, and the blossoms have to be set, or they would not produce fruit. The rest of the tribe have gone inland.

The name of this place, he tells me, is Măgna, *and also Madian* (Midian)![1] You may well imagine how this took me by surprise. In the Map of the "Wanderings of the Israelites," in your little Bible,[2] there is a "Madian" marked in about this position; but when you drew my attention to it sometime back, I only fancied it to be one of the "traditional" identifications, having no idea that there was any such place actually so called. But here it is: there

[1] See Captain Burton's further discoveries in 1877, referred to at page 69 of this work.

[2] Printed at the University Press, Oxford, and published by Gardner & Son. London: 1847.

is no mistake about it. How it came to get this name I do not know. The Beduin repeatedly said it is known by both names, but the pilot says he only knows it by that of Măgna. I could not find out from the Beduin whence the name of "Madian" is derived: but I have set Abu Nabut to try and find this out from him, and hope to ascertain. Meanwhile I have a theory of my own. Maghara Sho'eib is in about this latitude, and only half a day's journey inland from hence.[1] *This* then, and

[1] In Burckhardt's "Arabia" (London, Colburn, 1829), a map is given showing the Hadj route east of the Gulf of Akaba. Like Rüppell and Burton, his course was from Suez to Tor, Ras Mohammed, and thence to Moilah. In his map (ii. p. 392), the names run from N. to S. thus:—Akaba, Thaher el Homar; Shorafa [Marah]; Moghayr Shayb [Maghara Sho'eib, or Jethro's Cave]; Ayoun el Kassab, and Kalat el Moeyleh—the latter place being described at p. 430 of his work. Dr. Beke says in his "Sinai a Volcano," p. 37: —"The road which I consider the Israelites to have taken corresponds so entirely to the words of the Scripture narrative, that, when once the incubus of 'tradition' shall be shaken off, I cannot bring myself to believe there will remain any doubt respecting it. This road is that, namely, taken at the present day by the pilgrims from Cairo to Mecca after passing Akaba, and described by the traveller Burckhardt, who, it is needless to explain, entertained not the slightest idea of its being that of the Children of Israel on their way from Mitzraim [to the 'Encampment by the Red Sea' at Midian]. The coincidence, too, of the Hadj stations with those of the Israelites is most striking. Thaher el Homar and Shorafa, respectively with bad water and without water, may be taken to correspond to the three days' journey without water to Marah with bitter water, whilst the description of Moghayr Shayb, with 'many wells of sweet water, date plantations, and trees among the wells,' is almost identical with that of Elim, with its 'twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees.'" Numbers xxxiii. 9, 10; Exod. xv. 22, 23, 27.

not Ainúnah, must have been the "Encampment by the Red Sea of the Israelites" of Numbers xxxiii. 10; and in the names "Maghara Sho'eib" and "Madian" we have a *distorted* tradition of the presence of the Israelites here. Of course the tradition, if preserved, must necessarily have become distorted; as otherwise it would have been contradictory to the received tradition respecting the position of Mount Sinai. I much prefer this spot, with its wood of date palms, for the encampment by the sea; but had I come here without going to Ainúnah, I might have been accused of twisting facts to suit my own views. As it is, I have visited *both* places, and therefore, cannot have any personal partiality for the one rather than the other: and this "Madian" is certainly preferable in every respect. I must not forget to mention that Ainúnah and Ain el Kassab are both correct names for the other place; at least, so they tell me here.

Water was soon brought us, and it is deliciously pure and sweet: the Arab was told to get us twenty skins for to-morrow morning; also a sheep, if any are to be had. Besides dates, they appear to have limes here, as the Captain showed me a small unripe one. The man now asked for coffee and tobacco, of the latter of which article a little was

given him, and some coffee. I also gave him an orange in exchange for his lime. After talking a long time with us and then with the pilot, he was taken back on shore. They have no boats here, and no animals, the camels being all with the tribe inland.

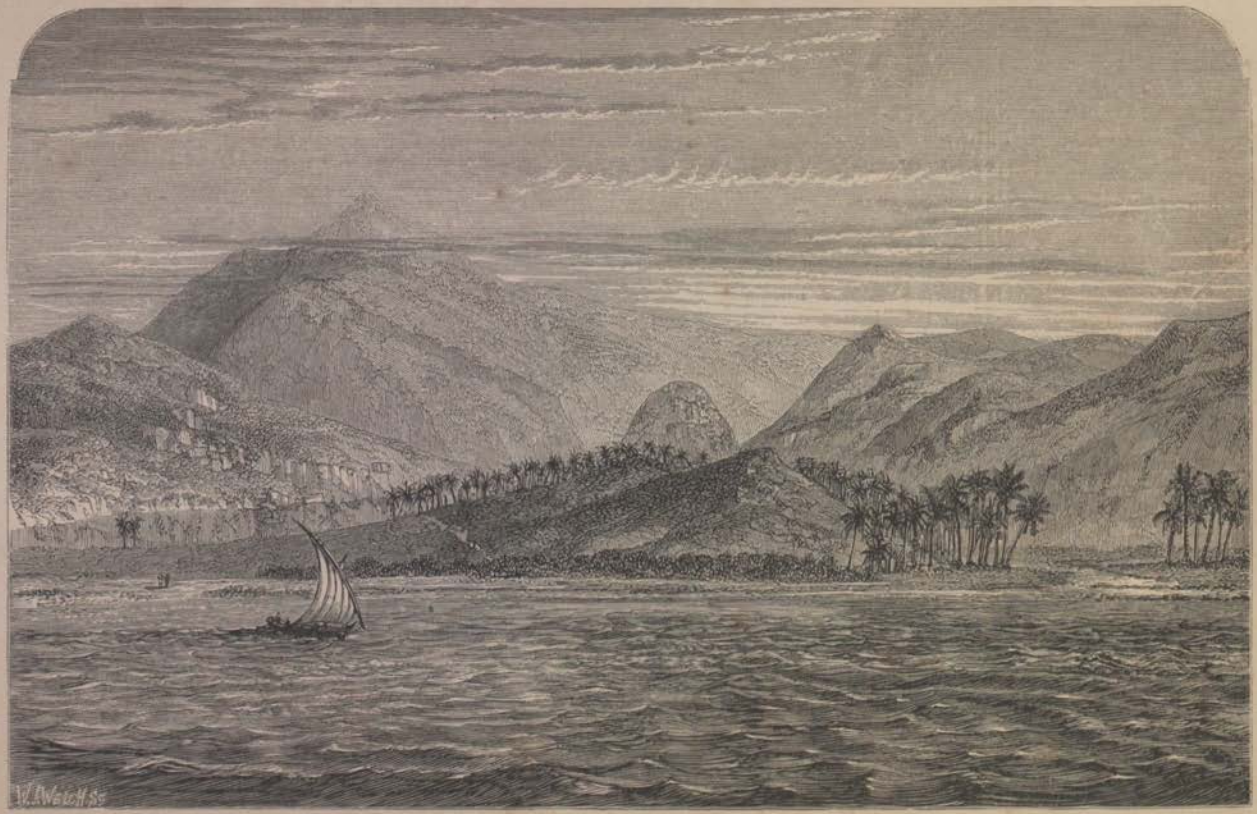
The 'Erin' is safely anchored behind a headland forming the side of a sort of bay, with a long reef running out from it, which shelters us well from the north. There is, however, no anchorage for large vessels here—these would have to stand off whilst their boats came on shore for water.

January 25.—The wind, which had seemed to fall in the evening, rose during the night, so as to blow a perfect tempest: the crew were up three times during the night, thinking that we were driven from our anchorage: they had warped us to the shore by way of greater security; but when I came this morning to see the rope by which we are fastened, I was thankful that we had not to depend on that at all, as it would not have held us a moment. I passed a wretched night, and this morning am altogether unwell; my head aches, so that I can hardly hold it up—a very unusual occurrence for me; and besides this, my ankle is somewhat swollen and painful. I do not know whether I hurt it going on shore at Ainúnah, or whether it

is a little gouty: in any case, I have made up my mind not to go on shore. It is a great sacrifice to me, as I now believe *this* to be really holy ground instead of Ainúnah; but I resign myself to the sacrifice since it *must* be. I should be very wrong to run the chance of making myself ill before I get to Akaba.

Last night I ordered breakfast to be served early this morning in order that we might not lose time in going on shore. Accordingly at 7 A.M. we breakfasted, and after this Milne made a sketch of the place before landing. Midian is a very much prettier place than Ainúnah, though his sketch is not so, owing to the sun being behind instead of before him. When he had finished it he went on shore accompanied by Abu Nabut, Hashim and most of the crew. The engineers have plenty of work to do on board, and I have my journal, which I have now managed to write up. About half-past ten the boat brought off a number of skins of water and two Beduin lads, and when the water had been taken on board, and the boat was about to return to the shore, I felt myself so much better that I decided on going in it.

On the beach I found some twenty persons, mostly children, and all males: there was not one



'MIDIAN,' (HALF A DAY'S JOURNEY FROM MAGHARA SHO'EIB), OR THE "ELIM" OF EXODUS.

To face p. 340.

female to be seen. Abu Nabut had been making inquiries for me, and I learned through him that the place is called "Măgna" by the Arabs, but that its old official name is "Madiān," by which it is known to the Măzri (Egyptians) and the pilgrims to Mecca. I walked a quarter of a mile and more in the direction of the watercourse, and up it. It is some fifty yards wide, and carries water into the sea during the rains. I came to some beautiful palm groves, the trees being countless, and they extend some considerable distance up the valley, which comes from the east, that is to say, from the neighbourhood of Maghara Sho'eib, if not actually from it. In front of the date-palm groves are plantations of barley on a small scale, which are enclosed in hedges formed by the leaves of the date-palm; the entrance to which is closed by a curious door fastened by bolts and cords in a most mysterious manner. Within there are also growing lime, nebbuk, and fig-trees. Here I met Milne returning laden with stones, and two or three drawings he had made.[1]

Abu Nabut tells me that "Maghara" means a

[1] Those who are interested in the geological formations of Midian and the discoveries of gold recently made by Captain Burton there, I would refer to "Appendix A.," which specially treats of the quartz veins in the granite, &c.

cave artificially made, not a natural cavern. I do not think this signifies much, as the artificial dwelling was originally a natural cave. I was told by one of the Arabs, "who had seen it with his eyes," that, at an hour's distance, there is a place marked with stones where *the Prophet Moses prayed to God!* Of course this is so important that it must be seen. It is unfortunately too far off for me to think of walking there, and as there is no other means of getting to the place, I was compelled to content myself to accept Milne's offer to go for me. So it was decided that we should return on board to lunch; and then that he should go again on shore with Hashim and the Beduin as a guide. Then we went off to the ship, taking with us some shells which we had picked up.

We lunched, and at half-past twelve Milne was off to the "praying place of Moses," as it is called. He is very good, and does everything I ask him to do, especially as he sees that I am not too exigent. These traditions about Moses and Jethro are very curious. I do not wish to attach too much value to them; but, at all events, they are worth quite as much as those *within* the peninsula. I may fairly set the one set of traditions to neutralise the other: and I should say that *these* have every appearance

of being *older* than those, and certainly better fulfil the requirements of the Scripture History, and adapt themselves better to it, especially when taken in connection with the information recorded by travellers like Burckhardt, Rüppell, Palgrave, and others. Burckhardt, in giving the following description of the stations on the Syrian Hadj route from Ma'an,[1] says it is :—"A long day's journey to the Castle of Akaba Esshamie, or the Syrian Akaba. . . . Here is a Birket of rain-water. The Hadj road, as far as Akaba, is a complete desert on both sides, yet not incapable (p. 659) of culture. The mountain chain continues at about ten hours to the *west* of the Hadj route. . . . From the foot of the castle walls the Hadj descends a deep chasm, and it takes half an hour to reach the plain below. . . . The mountain consists of a red grey sandstone. . . . The mountain sinks gradually, and is lost at a great distance in the plain, which is very sandy.

"Medawara, one day's journey, a castle with a Birket of rain-water.

"Dzat Hadj, a castle surrounded by a great number of wells, which are easily found on digging two or three feet. It has likewise a Birket of rain-water.

[1] See Burckhardt, Appendix III., "The Hadj Route from Dámascus to Mekka," p. 658.

At four hours from it is a descent, rendered difficult by the deep sand. It is called El Araie, or Halat Ammar. . . . From Halat Ammar the plain is no longer sandy, but covered with a white earth as far as Tebouk. The vicinity of Dzat Hadj is covered with palm trees; but the trees being male, they bear no fruit, and remain very low. The inhabitants sell the wood to the Hadj.

"One day from Dzat Hadj is Tebouk, a castle, with a village of Felahein. . . . There is a copious source of water, and gardens of fig and pomegranate trees, where Badintshans (egg plant), onions, and other vegetables, are also cultivated. The Fellahs collect in the neighbouring desert the herb *Beiteran* (a species of milfoil). . . . The castle is also surrounded by shrubs with long spines called Mekdab, which the Fellahs sell to the Hadj as food for the camels, and likewise two other herbs called Nassi and Muassal.

"Akhdhar, a castle with a Birket of rain-water, upon a small ascent. . . . El Moadham, a very long day's march (p. 660). Dar el Hamra. Medayn Szaleh. . . . El Olla . . . with a rivulet, and agreeable gardens of fruit-trees. Biar el Ghanam, with many wells of fresh water. Byr Zemerrod, a large well. Byr Dyedeyde.

"Hedye. . . . It is a Ghadeir, or low wady coming from Khaibar, which is four hours distant. . . .

"El Fahletein; asses, and what the Arabs call tigers, are met with here. . . .

"Biar Nasyeif, a number of wells in the sandy ground, which are every year newly digged up, because the wind covers them immediately after the caravan's departure."

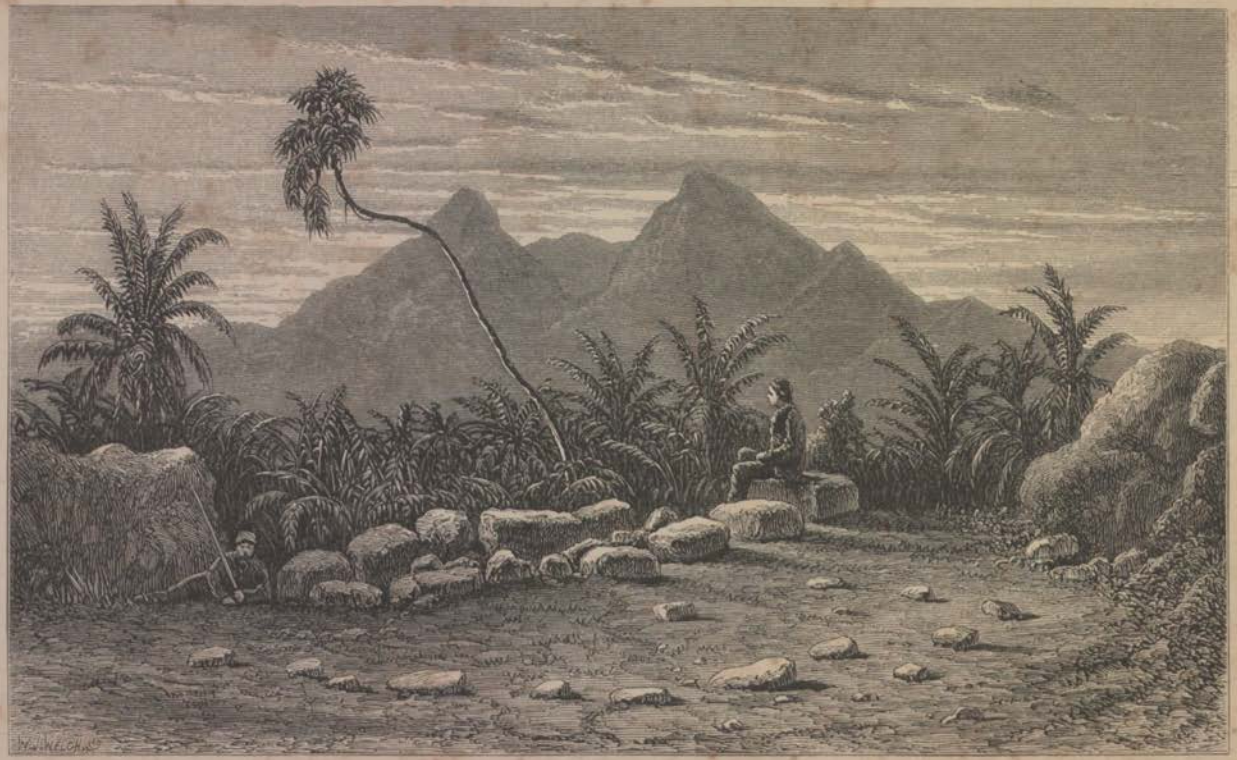
In Mr. Palgrave's "Travels in Arabia" the following particulars are given of the country *east* of the Syrian Hadj route from Ma'an:—"*Ows il Wells*, 30° 15′ N. 38° 10′ E.—When in the afternoon we resumed our way once more, we found the general appearance of the desert somewhat modified by large patches of sand or grass on its *black surface*, and these continued to increase in number and size as we went on.

"Before reaching Djoon, in Djowf, 29° 30′ N. 39° 10′ E., we had yet a long way to go, and our track followed endless windings among low hills and *basaltic ledges*, without any approach to cultivated regions. At last the slopes grew greener, and a small knot of houses with traces of a village close by appeared; *Djoon. 'Aatām-es-Sáad*, 28° 50′ N. 40° 10′ E.—Near sunset we came in sight of two lonely pyramidal peaks of dark

granite, rising amid the sand walls full in our way. . . . At midnight we passed close under the huge black masses of rock, but without stopping." These particulars will assist me with my book and map.

The sea is still very rough outside the reef, and there is no moving yet: we cannot even fish up the anchor, which lies in water some twenty fathoms deep. There are no sheep to be got here, so the crew have killed a pig they bought at Tor, and our cook has killed a turkey to roast for dinner. Another wind-dog was seen this morning. So you see we are weather-bound here, and the camels are at Akaba at five pounds a day, doing nothing! Whilst Milne was absent I wrote up my diary, and selected the best shells from a large quantity Abu Nabut brought on board with him. They will do for studs, and to make presents as memorials of Midian. They ought to have a greenish hue, but the sun has bleached them.

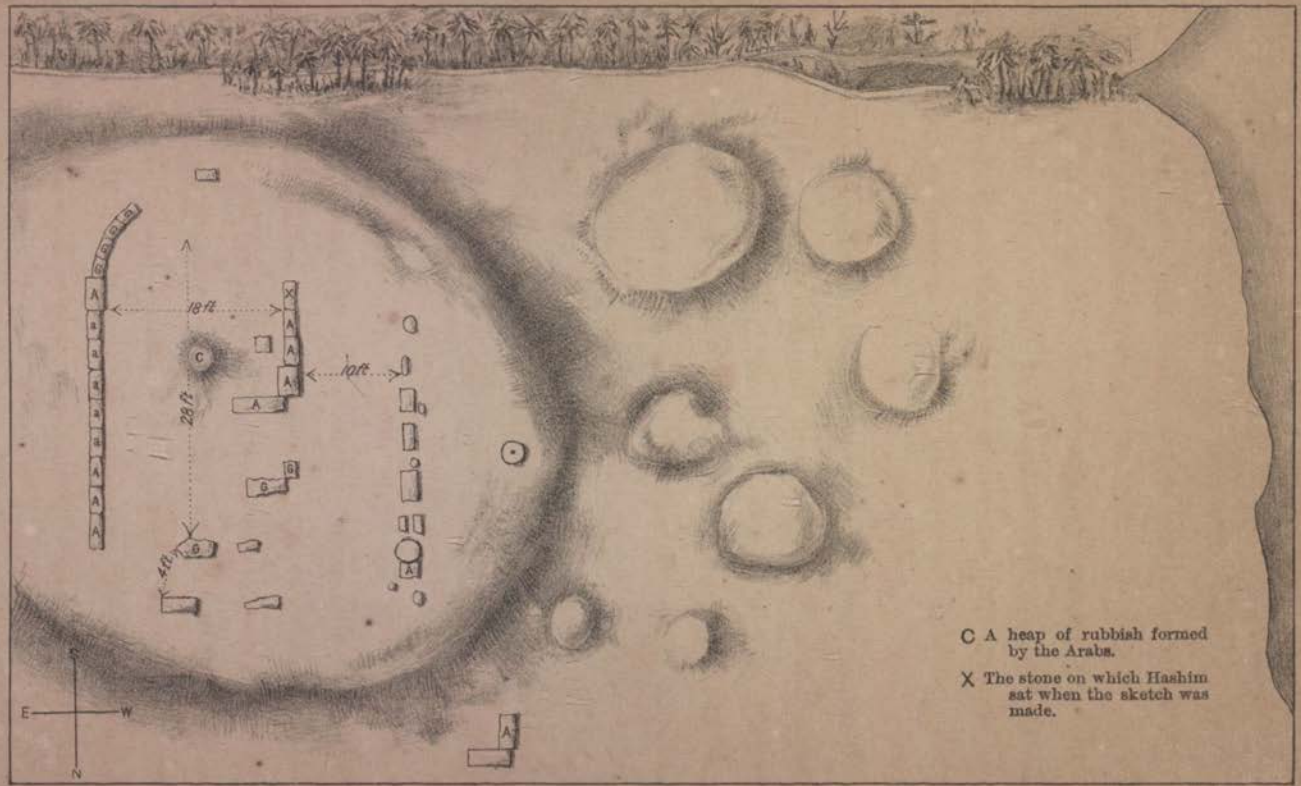
The Beduins here are the Beni Ughba; they number four hundred souls, and remain on the coast only about four months of the year. They seem to be a quiet, harmless people, not answering at all to the character given of them in the "Sailing Directions." They are very poor and badly



RUINS OF THE 'MOSQUE OF MOSES' AT MIDIAN, ON THE EAST COAST OF THE GULF OF AKABA.

To face p. 349

To face page 349.



PLAN OF "THE MOSQUE OF MOSES" AT MIDIAN.

off, and wanted to be paid for the water in bread, rice, coffee, &c. But Abu Nabut said this might do very well for a skin or two, but not for thirty-five—the number we have had. So the Captain gave them five francs, and Abu Nabut gave them four francs, with which they were well satisfied.

Milne came back to the beach at a quarter-past three, and brought with him a pretty and valuable drawing of the "Mosque of Moses," as the people call it, with the plan and full description. The remains are of *white alabaster*, a small piece of which I have kept for you. The spot where the ruins are is only a mile or so from the beach. Milne walked to it along the north side of a palm grove, gradually ascending over a sandstone slope, in many places worn into hummocks. He tells me that, at about half a mile from the sea, he came to a small stream about a yard wide, running in a channel worn in the solid rock. At this point he met with a small waterfall, or slide-down surface of rock, in all falling at least twelve feet, which looked very pretty among and with the palm trees overhanging it, and winding and losing itself among them. The surface has been quite cleared, so that one walks over the bare rock, which is composed of sand-

stone and conglomerate. A couple of hundred yards past this the rock is covered with sand, and just as you come to the end of the palm groves, you see a mound half as high as the palms, with the white blocks lying in the sand. Here there is a good view into the interior up the valley, along which date-palms are seen growing in patches; there are also a few dōm-palms, notably one overhanging the ruins.

Mr. Milne describes the ruins of the Mosque of Moses as follows:—"The blocks marked 'A' are of alabaster, whilst those marked 'G' are of granite, all much weathered. The alabaster blocks are about three feet long, and one foot six inches square. They all appeared to have been worked, but the edges are now rounded: one appears to form a portion of a column, and there would seem to have been two squares, one within the other, the south end of the inner one being semicircular, and there may have been another enclosure yet further out; but it is difficult to say. There are several large mounds near it, which may possibly contain other remains. The whole is being rapidly covered with sand, which is seen by its encroachments on the palm groves, which the natives try to prevent by erecting

fences. In one place the fence has been destroyed by the sand, and another erected further in."

On the chart of the Red Sea the ruins of the ancient Fort of Măgna (or Midian), and the encampment, with the running stream of water, are all placed much too far inland. The fort is not more than half a mile from the sea. Milne went as far as the running water; and, from what he says, there must be at the very least a thousand palm trees. The Beduin who was with us last night now came on board for some wine as "medicine" for his stomach, he said. Hashim had some for cooking, so he gave him a little. Then he came to me, calling out, "Hakim Bashi" several times. As I knew he had only come to beg, I pretended not to hear, but at last was obliged to turn round to him. His petition was, after all, a very reasonable one. It appeared that he had accompanied Mr. Milne to the Mosque of Moses, and now wanted four piastres as bakhshish, which I gave him, and he went away rejoicing.

Off and on all day the pilot has been diving, or looking for the anchor. He sits in the bow of the boat, with his head down almost to the level of the water, into which he looks with all his might. They say they know where it is; but I

see no proof of it. In the afternoon I spoke seriously to the Captain about our going on. He says the weather is still too bad; but if it would only become a little calmer, he would start, and leave the anchor to be fished up, or at least secured by the Beduins. Towards nightfall he made a great boast of starting during the night, at all risks, so as to anchor at Akaba to-morrow afternoon. But as there were no signs of getting up the steam I knew that this was all talk. After I had gone to bed I sent for him, and suggested that he should get up steam at all events, as, should it come on to blow so hard as to make the anchor part, he would be able to prevent the ship drifting on the lee-shore. But he said he was prepared for this by setting the two jibs, and so putting the vessel before the wind. With this I must needs be content.

January 26.—At about 7 A.M. the Captain came down into my cabin before I was up, to tell me the night had been worse than the two preceding nights, and at one time he really thought the anchor had slipped. This morning, however, the weather has calmed, and he had made up his mind to start, and continue all night, so as to get to Akaba to-morrow morning. I shall believe

him when we are really off. But, in fact, when I came on deck to breakfast at eight o'clock I found the fires were really lighted, which looks as if he were in earnest. We are here in 28° 23′ 30″ N. latitude, and Akaba is in 29° 29′, so that we have some sixty-six miles to run. The Captain and pilot are still looking for the anchor!

I was copying out some of Milne's geological notes, when, at 10.15 A.M., I heard the steam-whistle as a signal for starting, and the ship began moving. At 10.30 the boat was up, and we were off. It was a lovely morning, only the sea rather rough, and the wind ahead as usual: drawing as it does down the immense funnel from as far as the Bay of Tiberias, it is almost constantly from the north. We keep close along the Arabian coast, which screens us a little from the wind, and gives us a smoother sea than we should have farther off the shore. Still the waves make the little steamer (she is only sixty-four tons) pitch a good deal, and prevent the screw from working as it should. The Captain says we are not doing more than two miles an hour, but we have a current of one mile in our favour, and as we go on the weather improves, so that we begin to make very decent way, on the whole. She is too much down

in the stern, as was remarked at Suez; and in consequence of which it was thought well to shift forward some of the things on board, so as to bring her head down. To me the sea seems as nothing compared to what I have been in on the coast of Kent in an open boat. Certainly, I have crossed the Channel over and over again in very much worse weather; but then allowance must be made for the size of our little craft.

At 1 P.M. we passed under a bluff of granite rising perpendicularly out of the water, which corresponding to the dip of the land, is without soundings. It is called Jebel Suwékhed; but in the 'Sailing Directions' it is called Tayyibat Isem, which I fancy to be some misunderstanding as to its name being "good." The sea has had such an effect upon poor Milne that he could not get up to lunch; but he must needs eat a large lump of cheese, and then take an orange to keep himself from being sick!

As we went along under the side of the mountain we saw a man and a boy walking along a narrow shelf of sand forming a sort of beach at its foot. At the distance at which we were it seemed to us as if there was scarcely room for them to walk. What they were doing there, and how they

got there, was a puzzle to us; but the mystery was solved by our coming in front of a cleft in the mountain mass, at the foot of which was a little beach with date trees growing on it. I was sorry Milne was not in a state to make a sketch of it, but I supplied his place, and made a rough drawing of it, which will serve as the basis of a very pretty picture. It was now about 1.45 P.M. As we proceeded we witnessed signs of incipient vegetation on the face of the disintegrated granite: a tuft of grass here and there, and then a single stunted tamarisk. By and by the sandstone took the place of the granite, and the trees increased gradually in number, so as to almost form a little wood. We kept along in the deep water close along the shore, the hills gradually decreasing in height, till at 3.20 P.M. we stopped under a long sandy point called Bir-el-Máshiyah, in 28° 51′ north latitude, forty miles from the head of the Gulf of Akaba. About half a mile back from the beach there is an exposure of white coral and other shells. This is about twenty feet above the level of the sea by aneroid. Excepting these banks, the rest of the country is a flat plain, gently sloping upwards for two or three miles towards a range of granite hills.

We went in close to the land, and as the anchor

would not hold in the sandy bottom, it was carried on shore and a hole dug for it. A warp was also carried on shore. Here we are to remain till evening, when, if the wind falls, we are to go on during the night, so as to get to Akaba in the morning. The wind is rising just now, and I much fear we shall have to remain here all night. It is a good thing that we made the *détour* by Ainúnah, as we thereby escaped the bad weather in the Gulf, where it must have been infinitely worse than it was with us.

I cannot but look upon our voyage as having been thus far most fortunate and most favourable. When the subject is calmly considered, the undertaking is a most perilous one. The pilot knows the sea, it is true; but neither the Captain nor any of his crew have ever been up the Gulf before; and as to the young engineer—he tells me it is the first *sea* voyage he has ever made, his experience having been only on shore and in the harbour of Alexandria; however, he knows his business very well. Milne is up and well the moment we reach land, and is already gone on shore. I stay on board to write up my journal for you, as the Captain says he shall not remain at Akaba, and I want you to have the latest news. This day fortnight I hope

you will receive this letter. If the Captain waits a day at Akaba, I think I may be able to send you a telegram from *Etham* (Wady Ithem). Before dinner-time Milne returned on board, bringing with him some sketches he had made, and a collection of rocks and pieces of coral as usual. The coast has risen here twenty feet at least.

January 27 (*Tuesday*).—Please God this is our last day at sea. Before I went to bed last night the Captain talked of starting as soon as the tide changed, which I understood him to say would be about 9 P.M.; but at 11 P.M. I got up, and looking over the companion-hatchway, I saw the Captain and all the crew fast asleep! At midnight I got up again, when I found two of the men beginning to stir, and the Captain was also in motion. He told me they were on the point of starting; and in a few minutes the word "presta" (ready) was given from the engine-room; whereupon the Captain called all the crew up. On this I returned to my bed, where I listened to the pleasing sound of weighing anchor and stowing the chain cable on the deck right over my head. By one o'clock in the morning we were off: the moon was still up, so that we had her light till full on our course. At seven o'clock I got up and went on deck. It

was a delightful still morning, the sky rather overcast, and the sea quite smooth. We were now steaming with the current right up the middle of the Gulf. Last night I read to Captain Sciassar what is said in the 'Sailing Directions' about the *Palinurus* having been thrice blown from her anchors (in 1830), which he repeated to the chief mate; whereupon they congratulated themselves on being *with me;* but who could say whether they would have my good fortune on their return voyage. I told them the danger was in coming up, not in going down the Gulf, the wind being almost always from the north.

At 8 A.M., the wind having shifted a little, we hoisted sail, and continued on a perfectly *smooth* sea! I am now getting very anxious and nervous. To-morrow will perhaps decide my fate. I have perfect faith, and *yet* one cannot help doubting at times whether there may not, perhaps, be some great mistake after all. If so, I must be content to bear it; but I *will* not doubt. I feel sure that I am right, and that a few hours will prove me to be so. I cannot be so grossly deceived. Yesterday it was intensely cold, the wind at times blowing very sharp: between this and the burning sun I have got a little erysipelas in the left ear, so this

PHARAOH'S ISLAND (JESIRAT FIR'ÔN), WITH JEBEL BÁGHIR IN THE DISTANCE.

To face p. 359.

morning I have put my kefíya over my cap. It protects the ears, which the hat with its brim and puggery does not at all. The sun is burning hot with scarcely a breath of air this morning.

At 10.30 A.M. we passed *Jesirat Fir'ôn* (Pharaoh's Island) opposite Akaba.[1] In the 'Sailing Directions' this island is described thus:—"Jazirrat Far'aun, or Pharaoh Island, about a quarter of a mile long and 300 or 400 yards broad, lies in lat. 29° 24′, and from the fort and village of Akabah, S.W. by W. ½ W., distant about eight miles. The fortification occupies the whole of the top of the island. The Arabs at Akabah will bring supplies to this place in five or six hours, but they are *not to be trusted.*" There are caves in the island they say; but I fancy *they* are tanks only. Abu Nabut speaks of a cave, "Maghara," near it; but I can get no satisfactory information from him. Every one must, I think, admit that these traditions about Moses and Pharaoh in *this* Gulf are at least quite as valuable as those in the Gulf of Suez; especially when taken in connection with my hypothesis with respect to the position of Mitzraim and Midian,[2] and that

[1] See "Diario in Arabia Petrea," di Giammartino Arconati Visconti, Rome, 1872, pp. 270–275, and Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i. pp. 160, 161.

[2] See chap. ii.

the Gulf of Akaba is the Yam-Suph, or Red (Edom) Sea—navigated by the fleets of King Solomon and Hyram, king of Tyre[1]—which was crossed by the Israelites on the occasion of their departure from Mitzraim, as recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the Book of Exodus.

On the cumulative authority of the facts adduced in the second chapter of this work, it may be asserted without fear of confutation that by no possibility could "the Land of Mitzraim," the country of the bondage of the Israelites, have been on the Isthmus of Suez,[2] or anywhere to the westward of it within the limits of the present country of Egypt. The result thus obtained leads directly to the further inference that the Gulf of Suez cannot be that sea which—by the direction and under the miraculous protection of the Almighty—was crossed by the Israelites in their flight from Mitzraim, and must, therefore, have been the Gulf of Akaba.

The argument by which this conclusion has been arrived at, however greatly at variance with the notions on the subject hitherto universally adopted, might, doubtless, be considered of itself sufficiently conclusive; but it fortunately happens that we

[1] 1 Kings, chaps. ix. x.
[2] See Origines Biblicæ, p. 176, note.

possess the means of arriving at the same result *from the Scriptures themselves*—the authority of which is *confirmed* by my disputing, as I do, the "traditional" explanation of the geography of the Bible.

The arguments which are thus adducible from Scripture are as follows:—The scene of the miraculous passage of the children of Israel is designated by the inspired historian as the יַם־סוּף (Yam-Suph);[1] by which designation, and by no other, it continued to be known to the Israelites throughout the whole course of their national history.[2] This name, it may be remarked, has been variously rendered in the Septuagint version by the expressions Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα, θάλασσα Σὶφ, and ἔσχατη θάλασσα; but in the Vulgate it is (I believe invariably) translated *Mare Rubrum*, which authority has been followed by all the modern versions of the Bible, in which accordingly it is styled the *Red Sea*. In speaking, therefore, of the *Yam-Suph*, I use the expression "*Red Sea*" as a synonymous term: and at the same time, in order to avoid ambiguity, I distinguish the entire

[1] Origines Biblicæ, p. 177; Exod. xv. 4.

[2] See particularly Josh. xxiv. 6; Ps. cxxxvi. 13, 15; and Neh. ix. 9.

sea between the coasts of Arabia and Africa, to which the name of the "Red Sea" is usually applied by geographers,—and of which the *Yam-Suph*, or Red Sea proper, forms a part only,—by the name of the *Arabian Gulf*. So that the two head gulfs into which the Arabian Gulf is divided at its northern extremity are referred to by me respectively by the names of the *Gulf of Suez* and the *Gulf of Akaba*.

The only information respecting the situation of the Red Sea to be derived from those texts of Scripture in which that sea is mentioned in connection with Mitzraim, and as being the scene of the miracle wrought in favour of the Israelites, is that it lay in an easterly direction from Mitzraim;[1] and that the Israelites, having crossed it, "went out into the Wilderness of Shur,"[2] which, we are told, was "*before* (this is not necessarily the *east*) Mitzraim, as thou goest toward Assyria."[3]

Dismissing from our minds for a moment the formation of the low country in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Suez, the foregoing references to the locality of the Red Sea might be considered

[1] "And the Lord turned a mighty strong *west* wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Mitzraim."—Exod. x. 19.

[2] Exod. xv. 22. [3] Gen. xxv. 18.

to be applicable either to that Gulf or to the Gulf of Akaba, according to the view which we might take of the position of the country of Mitzraim, on the eastern side of which that sea is thus shown to have been situate. There is another set of texts, however, which do not refer to the passage of the Red Sea, but which describe the sea which washed the shores of Edom as being known, in the time of Moses, in that of Solomon, and even so late as the age of the Prophet Jeremiah, by the same name of *Yam-Suph* (Exodus xv. 4):[1] which description (as it is by other texts of Scripture determined that the position of the country of Edom was to the southward of the Dead Sea),[2] it is evident, can-

[1] "And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab."—Deut. ii. 8.

"And King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea [Yam-Suph], in the land of Edom."—1 Kings ix. 26.

"Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord, that He hath taken against Edom; and His purposes, that He hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out. The earth is moved at the noise of their fall; at the cry the river thereof was heard in the Red Sea [Yam-Suph]."—Jer. xlix. 20, 21.

"Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the sea-side in the land of Edom."—2 Chron. viii. 17.

[2] "Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin,

not be applicable, under any circumstances, to the Gulf of Suez, but to the Gulf of Akaba alone.[1]

If, therefore, the *Yam-Suph* referred to by Moses, by Joshua, by David, and by Nehemiah, as the scene of the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites, be not the same sea as the *Yam-Suph* mentioned in connection with the country of Edom, by Moses himself, and also by Joshua, and subsequently by the writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles, and by the Prophet Jeremiah, we are

along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward."—Numb. xxxiv. 3.

"This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom, the wilderness of Zin, southward, was the uttermost part of the south coast. And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh southward."—Josh. xv. 1, 2.

[1] In Dr. Beke's Diary, 14th April 1835, he says: "The following text appears conclusive as to the position of the *Yam-Suph*:—'And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea [*Yam-Suph*], even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river' (Exod. xxiii. 31), written (as seems certain) during the sojourn by Mount Sinai, before the Gulf of Akaba could have been known to Moses and the Israelites, according to the vulgar notion that it was the Gulf of Suez that was crossed by the Israelites, but yet referring to the Gulf of Akaba as the *Yam-Suph* which was to be the *eastern* limit of the Promised Land. I conceive also that Gerar must have been to the south of the Dead Sea, at the *eastern*, and not the western side of the Promised Land, in the country of the Philistines *before* they removed to the coast of the Mediterranean and drove out the Canaanites. This they must have done subsequently to the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and during the time of the bondage in Mitzraim."

led to the strange and indeed most improbable conclusion, that the two Gulfs of Suez and Akaba, which are at a distance from each other of more than a hundred and fifty miles, were, during the entire period of the existence of the Israelitish nation, not merely known by the same name, but were even perfectly undistinguishable the one from the other:—a conclusion which nothing but the gratuitous assumption that the Gulf of Suez was the Red Sea passed by the Israelites would for a moment have allowed to be entertained.[1]

Should the arguments and proofs already adduced be not considered even more than sufficient to rebut that assumption, and to demonstrate that the Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, is *invariably* referred to in Scripture by the designation of *Yam-Suph*, or Red Sea[2]—and particularly that it is the sea which was passed through by the Israelites on their Exodus from Mitzraim—the statement of Scripture with respect to the natural agent employed by the Almighty to effect the miraculous passage will incontestably establish the

[1] *Ludolfi, Commentarius ad Historiam Ethiopicam*, L. 26, 2; and ים קצרים of Isaiah xi. 15, probably the Gulf of Suez.

[2] *Dictionnaire Universel de Geographie*, tome 1er, Paris, 1823, in Cahen's Bible, Exode, pp. 115, 116; Ibid., p. 22, note.

fact thus asserted; for the words of the text are totally inapplicable to the situation of the Gulf of Suez, and can, in fact, refer only to the Gulf of Akaba. I refer to the words of the inspired historian with respect to the "strong east wind" which blew during the passage of the Israelites, and made them pass on dry land.[1]

Having then, as I conceive, determined beyond the possibility of doubt the true position of the Red Sea of Scripture, I may be allowed to remark, that there cannot be a more striking exemplification of the consequences of permitting any *human* authority to supersede the exercise of our reason than the erroneous position which, down to the present time, has been attributed to that sea.

Dean Stanley, in the preface to his "Sinai and Palestine" (p. xxi.), after remarking that to some persons "the mere attempt to define sacred history by natural localities and phenomena will seem derogatory to their ideal or divine character," very justly adds, that "if, for example, the aspect of the ground should, in any case, indicate that some of the great wonders in the history of the Chosen People were wrought through means which, in modern lan-

[1] Origines Biblicæ, pp. 181–189, and "Mount Sinai a Volcano," pp. 29–31; Exod. xiv. 21.

guage would be called natural, we must remember that such a discovery is, in fact, an indirect proof of the general correctness of the truth of the narrative."

The wonder is, how an error of such moment, and one which was so easy of rectification, should during so many ages have maintained its ground undetected, and, as far as I have the means of judging, even without the slightest suspicion of its existence.

It is a satisfaction, however, that we at least possess the means of detecting and explaining to some extent the origin of this error, which is simply as follows:—Independently of the general ignorance of the Jews subsequently to the loss of their national independence, which led them to imagine that the Egypt of Profane History was the country in which the bondage of their ancestors had taken place, we have the most convincing proof from Herodotus that in his time the existence of the Gulf of Akaba was unknown to the Egyptians, and, *à fortiori*, to the Jews then resident in Egypt. According to his account, the sea to the east of the Arabian peninsula (the Persian Gulf of the present day), and also the Indian Ocean to the south of Arabia, were called by

the name of *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*,[1] with which sea the Arabian Gulf is correctly stated by him to have communicated.[2]

We are more especially led to the conclusion that this historian, in common with the Egyptians, from whom he derived his information, was ignorant of the existence of the eastern branch of the Arabian Gulf, by the statement which he makes when describing one of the regions into which he divides the world—namely, that this region "commences in Persia, and is continued to the Red Sea *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*, here the Persian Gulf. Besides Persia, it comprehends Assyria and Arabia, naturally terminating in the Arabian Gulf, into which Darius introduced a channel of [canal from] the Nile;"[3] thus unequivocally establishing his ignorance of the existence of any division between the mainland of Arabia and the peninsula of Pharan, or Mount Tor.[4]

[1] Clio, clxxx.; Melpom. xxxvii., xxxix.; and see notes from Larcher and Bryant on the last, in Beloe's translation. It is true that in Melpom. xli. Herodotus refers to the Arabian Gulf by the name of *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*; but, at the same time, he clearly distinguishes this from his general application of it.

[2] Euterpe, xi.

[3] Melpom. xxxix. In quoting Beloe's translation of Herodotus, on account of its being the version which is best known in this country, it is scarcely necessary to protest against its many well-known inaccuracies and defects.

[4] In Dr. Beke's Diary, 11th November 1833, I find the following

This being, then, the state of knowledge in Egypt respecting the Arabian Gulf 450 years before the Christian era, we can readily understand how the Jews, who subsequently to that period resided in Egypt, and particularly in Alexandria the extreme western point of that country, should have entertained similar notions on the subject; and as they had (we know not how long anterior to the epoch of the Septuagint translation) also adopted the idea that the Mitzraim of Scripture was identical with the then flourishing kingdom of Egypt, under the sway of the mighty dynasty of the Ptolemies,—in the face, however, of the prophecies, which had said that Mitzraim should be "the basest of the kingdoms,"[1] and that there should "be no more a prince of the land of Mitzraim,"[2]—it is readily conceivable how the Gulf of Suez, the sea immediately to the eastward of Egypt, should have been regarded as the Red Sea in which the host of Pharaoh was over-

entry: "It is clear that Herodotus only knew the Arabian Gulf as a single straight gulf, and was unconscious of the bifurcated head. Rennell, to whom I have referred this evening, did not remark this, but lays down the two head gulfs in his map, showing (as he alleges) the notions of Herodotus on geography. This error at once explains the application of the name of the ים סוף to the Gulf of Suez: the Septuagint were, in fact, ignorant of the existence of the Gulf of Akaba!"

[1] Ezek. xxix. 15.

[2] Ezek. xxx. 13.

whelmed. When once this conclusion had been formed, and the Jewish residents in Egypt had thence proceeded to determine (as they conceived satisfactorily,) the sites of the several localities connected with that miraculous occurrence, it would have been expecting too great a concession from that bigotry which unfortunately has generally characterised the Rabbins and their disciples, that they should have been induced, simply by an effort of reason, to reconsider and to impugn the authority which they had thus recognised; so that the knowledge subsequently acquired of the existence of the Gulf of Akaba would have availed them literally nothing.

Yet, however the Jews may have persisted in the error into which they had in the first instance unintentionally fallen, it is quite inconceivable how this erroneous authority should have so unhesitatingly been followed by Christian commentators and travellers, who possessed ample means for arriving at a correct judgment, and who ought not to have been bound in the trammels which enslaved those from whom they had originally derived their false impressions on the subject.

In thus establishing the fact that the Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, is the *Yam-*

Suph, or Red Sea of Scripture, we at the same time obtain the strongest confirmation of the inference drawn from the physical condition of Lower Egypt in former times, that that country is not the Mitzraim of Scripture.

Having, therefore, demonstrated that the Mitzraim of the Bible was not the Egypt of Profane History, but that it was situated somewhere within the basin of the Wady el 'Arīsh, in the direction of the land of the Philistines, which "was near;"[1] and that the Biblical Midian was part of the "East Country,"[2] *i.e.*, to the east of the Gulf of Akaba; and further, that the Red Sea of Scripture, through which the Israelites passed on their flight from Mitzraim, was not the Gulf of Suez, but the Gulf of Akaba; I shall now proceed with the narrative of my journey for the discovery and identification of the true Mount Sinai, and of the various stations connected with the Exodus of the Israelites from Mitzraim.

January 27, *continued.*—The sea is as smooth as glass. We have not met with a single sail in

[1] Exod. xiii. 17.

[2] Which my discoveries at Midian (on the 24th January 1874) of the "Mosque of Moses" and "Maghara Sho'eib," or Jethro's Cave, now confirm. See Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 33–35 (edit. 1864); Ibid., pp. 191, 194, *post*.

the Gulf, not even a row-boat or a canoe! About two o'clock this morning the man on watch saw a green (?) and red light, which he took for a light-house—not very likely to be met with here. It must have been a fire lighted by some Beduins.

The mountains seem to fall as we go north, but still they are high in the background. Akaba is in sight, thank God! and the Captain is going to hoist his colours. It is just eleven o'clock. Milne made a drawing of the approach to Akaba and head of the Gulf, from which it will be seen that the earth and sky seem to meet, so little is the rise. Not a mound in front. It is a basin, where the sides slope down to a mere line in the horizon. As we approach nearer Akaba, the granite continues on both sides of the Gulf, but on the left there is also what appears to be limestone. On the right are numerous date-trees along the beach, and also a few round the head of the Gulf. The sea is as smooth as a millpond; the plain behind is thickly covered with trees, and the Castle of Akaba is nearly hidden by the date-palms which surround it. We can see the people flocking down to the shore in great numbers, surprised, no doubt, at seeing so novel a sight as a steamer arrive in these waters, and wondering what it can mean.

HEAD OF THE GULF OF AKABA, OR 'PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA OF THE ISRAELITES.'

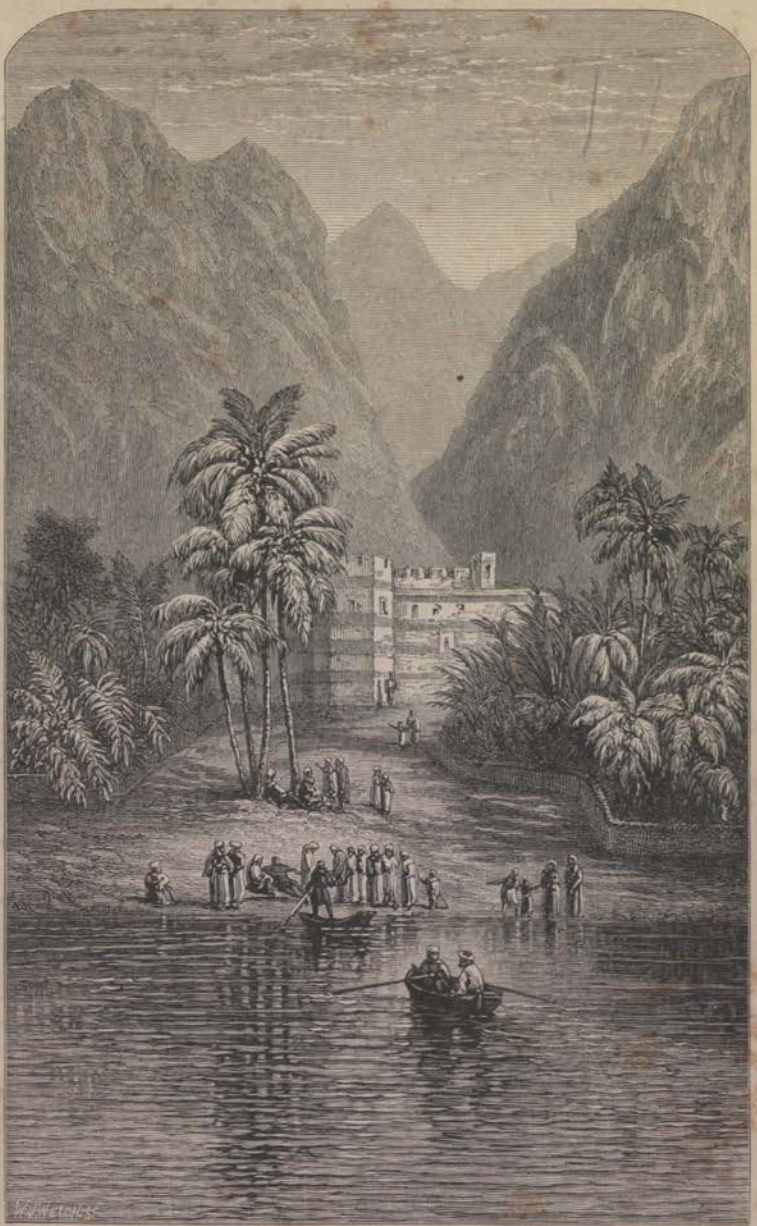
To face p. 372.

The Caravan Hadj road goes up a wady behind the castle. The mountains on the west side of the Wady Arabah are visible a long way to the north; in fact, as far as the eye can see. Abu Nabut now tells me that he does *not* know of any cave here, and you know he so positively assured me he had *seen* it.

At 12.30 we approached the shore, and gave a whistle, and at 12.40 we anchored opposite the castle, at a distance of nearly half a mile. The Captain dressed himself as well as he could without his uniform: in clean shirt and blue coat with naval buttons (crescent and anchor), and went on shore. As he stepped from his boat all the people crowded round him: the soldiers came running down from the castle, and (as he told me on his return) they received him with military salute. I feel very ill and very shaky. I am dreadfully nervous, and scarcely know what to do with myself. At half-past two o'clock the Captain returned bringing with him the Egyptian Muhafiz or Commander, a Lieutenant in the army, with forty soldiers under him. We saluted one another, and I ordered coffee for him; but he is fasting to-day, on account of the festival to-morrow, when they kill the ram on Mount Arafat at Mecca, and he therefore could not take any. He

has already received orders from the Khédive to receive me, and has sent to the Sheikh of the Arabs, who is absent. Without him, he says, he has no power to do anything for me. There are Arab tribes in every direction, and the Sheikh alone is able to protect me. When he comes I shall be consigned into his hands, and when I have done all I want to do, he will bring me back again to the Muhafiz. The letter to him which Consul Rogers had given me I handed to him. There are no ships here, not even a boat; but they tell me a steamer came here in the time of Ibrahim Pasha, and every year a vessel comes from Suez to the garrison. So, after all, the Gulf of Akaba is not so unknown as I fancied. This does away with a good deal of the romance, does it not?

Most of our things having already been landed, at 3 P.M. we went on shore. Before leaving the ship I gave the Captain six dollars for the pilot, and a couple of Napoleons for the crew; for they have been very attentive and obliging—so much so, indeed, that I was almost tempted to add another Napoleon; but I hold my hand on starting lest I should run short before I get back to Suez. When we got on shore we found our tent ready pitched, and that of the cook nearly ready.



'MIGDOL,' OR CASTLE OF AKABA.

To face p. 374.

But, without going into our tent, I went straight to the fortress with the Commandant, who was on the beach waiting to welcome us. Inside the entrance the soldiers of the garrison were drawn up to receive us, and saluted me as I entered. They had not their guns.

The place consists of a large square courtyard, just like our barrack squares, with the dwellings of the soldiers all round. On one side are magazines for the provisions, both for the soldiers and also for the pilgrims of the Hadj. There are loopholes all round the building for musketry, and at each corner is a cannon of seven or eight pounds. In the courtyard stands a fieldpiece of four or five pounds. Altogether, it would make a sure defence against any number of Beduins. The castle has lately been done up, and looks really quite respectable. A kind of divan was formed for us on one side of the courtyard, a mat and cushions being placed on a sort of raised bank. Coffee was then brought to us, of which I had to drink three cups. The Commandant now excused himself because he had to go and superintend the distribution of the rations of meat for the feast, which commences this evening; and whilst we were sitting there a cannon was fired off to signalise its commencement.

The garrison consisted formerly of the Towara Arabs, but eight months ago these were replaced by Egyptian regular soldiers. Besides the Commandant there are two other officers, one of whom is the scribe (adjutant or quartermaster), who came to arrange with the Captain as to the bill of health, which, on leaving the ship and landing here, has to be entered, the Commandant affixing his seal. After sitting and talking some time, we came on to our tents, accompanied by two officers, to whom we gave coffee. I was then left in peace to write up my journal.

I am in great anxiety as to what I am to do. I wanted to give you some *certain* news by the 'Erin' on her return; but this unfortunate absence of the Sheikh of the Arabs, and this holiday, interferes with me, and I fear the Captain will be obliged to leave. But he must be dismissed by me, and I have told him I cannot do this until the arrival of the Sheikh, so that I may be able to report. He tells me—though I scarcely can believe him—that his first orders were to bring me to Akaba and *wait* for me. This is contrary to all I heard at Suez, and even to what McKillop Bey wrote to me. I have McKillop's letter now before me, in which he expressly says she was not

to return to Suez, but to coal at Tor, and proceed to Massowah. I have spoken to Milne about it, and he tells me it was Seid Bey who *thought* so at first; but of course he knew nothing of the arrangement.

A sentry is placed at the door of our tent, and three others are picketed here, their arms being piled near the other tents. The Muhafiz is determined to do us all honour. At about six o'clock I saw the guard changed in due form, the corporal standing by while the one sentry gave the *consigne* to the other: we were then just sitting down to dinner, Milne having come in with sketches of all sorts. Whilst we were eating, the Muhafiz came from on board ship. As he looked in at our tent door, I could not but say, "*tifuddel*" (favorisca), on which he entered and sat down. Of course I said "*Bismillah*," but he said it was yet an hour before he could eat. Hardly had this conversation transpired when Abu Nabut came in and most unceremoniously told him to *ainolich*, he had no business to intrude; on which the poor man bundled off without so much as saying "Good-bye." It was hardly decent; but still we could not help laughing. In the evening a few drops of rain fell. There must have been a good deal of

rain in the upper country. After dinner I felt myself so tired and exhausted that I was glad to go to bed early.

January 28, *The Feast of Bairam.*—At sunrise three guns were fired from the fortress. I find that Abu Nabut has sent away our guard in order that they may keep the feast. I fancy he does not care to have to support them, which would hardly fail to be the case were they to remain here. The 'Erin' is decked out with all the colours of the rainbow: the British flag being now at the foremast head. I have had a famous good wash, and put on all clean clothes, of which I was in need, after all the dirt we had experienced on board. I did not sleep very well, but I feel myself very much better this morning. The wind is now from the *south.*

At 8 A.M. we heard lots of firing of musketry, but we did not trouble ourselves to go and see what was doing. There is a village here composed of miserable mud huts, and the whole population may be some two hundred souls, including the garrison. Each soldier has his "wife." The date plantations are enclosed within mud walls. I have invited our Captain to dine with us to-day, and have been writing letters for him to take back to Suez, ex-

pressive of my satisfaction. The wind continues to blow strongly from the south, and it is raining hard and thundering! By 3.30 P.M. the storm had become terrific, so that Captain Sciassar could not leave if he would. After luncheon he came to ask me for some medicine for the people in the village, so I had to open my medicine-chest. You naughty girl! what a variety you have given me. I won't take any of them, but shall bring them all home to you. Thank God, I have as yet no occasion for them.

In the course of the afternoon the Commandant paid me a visit, accompanied by his Lieutenant. We talked of things in general, and, in the course of conversation, I learned that his pay is equal to £4 per month, of which fifty shillings are in rations, and thirty only in money! He has three rations, and can sell two if he does not use them. Glorious pay this for a Commandant! The garrison here were Bashi Bazuks—irregular native troops—till the present, regular, force came eight months ago.

January 29, *Thursday.* — Fine still weather. The Sheikh has not yet come, and there are no signs of him; but they say he will surely be here to-day. However I am impatient, and have sent

Abu Nabut to the Haz Bashi (centurion) to say that, if I cannot move about from here, I shall go back in the ship to Cairo, and report it to the Khédive: that I did not come here to remain 'seated' day after day. This had the desired effect, and soon brought the Centurion (such is the Commandant's rank in the army) to me. At first he said he had no power to protect me, except close to the fortress. But on my explaining I only wanted to go to Wady Ithem first, he said he would himself accompany me so far. He therefore went off to prepare the escort. Abu Nabut thought I was going myself, and got ready the camels and also commenced preparing the *takhterawân;* but I stopped this, telling him Mr. Milne would go alone.

I want him to see the three low hills Dean Stanley speaks of, and to tell me what he thinks of them—whether volcanic or not. As he comes back he will look at the head of the Gulf, and at the mountains on the other side of the Arabah, where *he ought* to find caves. I am told there are caves six hours up the Wady Arabah, but they are too far off for my purpose. There is also a cave *up the mountain* opposite. This shows that there are plenty of "caves" about here. And so it must be,

inasmuch as this is the country of the Horites, or "Dwellers in Caves"—Troglodites. Close to the shore here, within a few feet only, fresh water may be obtained by making a hole in the sand with the hands, a few inches deep. This shows that we are at the mouth of a large wady, with plenty of water above. North-north-east of us I have had pointed out to me, at a distance of half a day's journey or so, Mount Bághir, where I was at first told was some memorial of Moses. But it turns out to be, upon further inquiry, a *Wely's* tomb, which is visited by the Beduins.

I have written to Mr. Bates a few lines, which I enclose. If you please, you can refer him to what is said anywhere in the newspapers about my journey. It would be well for Sir Bartle Frere to be able to make some communication respecting my proceedings, as the meetings of the Royal Geographical Society are now being held. When Captain Sciassar was dining with us last night, he told me that he had mixed the charcoal which he got from Ainúnah with his coal, and so made up some eight tons of it; but it is very weak fuel.

When we were at Midian (Madiān) it appears that a *hole* was found in the 'Erin's' bottom; but it was stopped by the pilot's diving. I noticed his

plunging into the water, but thought he was only enjoying a swim.

9 A.M.—Milne is off with the Haz (Turkish for 100) Bashi, and Hashim (as interpreter), mounted on camels. They take their lunch with them, and will, doubtless, be away all the day. Before night I may probably know something definite. If Milne finds that Dean Stanley's "three low peaks" are volcanic, the point may be looked upon as settled. If not, it will not follow that I am wrong; only we shall have to go further afield. Still I confess I shall be disappointed. All I can say is, that I am in God's hands. I am now getting everything ready for the departure of the 'Erin,' which will take place either to night or to-morrow morning. I have just seen the Captain and arranged with him. Abu Nabut has just been to me for more money, so I have given him five pounds. I am now awaiting Milne's return and report; but I am not nearly so nervously anxious as I have been. At all events, I am resigned to my fate, whatever in God's providence it may be, and I am sanguine and confident as to the result. I can now do little or nothing of myself. I am in His hands, to do with me as it seems good to Him.

3 P.M.—I have had a nice nap for a couple of

hours. As to the Sheikh, there is still no sign of him, and I fear I shall have to wait. It is well that I have acted without him. Captain Sciassar has come on shore with his sextant to regulate his, and my time by the sun. He makes my watch fifty minutes fast. I know that I have been gaining, but hardly think it can be so much. However, this cannot much signify, as we have no astronomical observation to make. In other respects I am well satisfied with my watch: it only wants regulating. In Egypt I could do nothing with it, as every timepiece there seemed to keep different time. When you receive my telegram from Suez of my safe return, you must telegraph back to me at once. It is blowing so hard again that I cannot write. I am just told that the Sheikh is coming.

3.45 P.M.—At half-past four o'clock the Sheikh of the Aluwín came in with Milne, whom he had fallen in with on the mountains, and wanted to know what right he had to be there without his leave. He was dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, with a long curved silver-handled sword by his side; and Milne says he is stuck all over with pistols; but I do not see them on account of their being covered by his *abba* (Arab cloak). He was accompanied by two

other Sheikhs of lower rank. I had gone to the door of the tent to look out, and so came upon him there, which I was sorry for. He said "Good morning" in English, which is the extent of his knowledge of the language.

Having entered the tent and sat down, the usual compliments took place. Abu Nabut explained, at my request, that I had come to see the country; that I had been to Ayoun el Kassab, the Madiān, &c. I then gave him the Khédive's firman and Mr. Rogers's letter. The former he opened, and the Muhafiz, who had come back with Milne, and was sitting by the Sheikh, read the contents, or at least gave him some idea of them. He listened, but made no remark, and soon afterwards asked for *chukha* (tobacco). Abu Nabut interpreted this to me, but, with my slight knowledge of Arabic, I had already understood, and I asked him if this was decent and respectful conduct in *my* tent? Abu Nabut said they were Beduins, and such was their custom; and I replied that it was a bad custom, and ought not to be encouraged. However, I gave him a packet of tobacco, one of several I brought from Cairo. He then began talking, and coffee was brought, of which he drank one cupful, and immediately held out his cup for a second.

These manners do not suit me, so I thought it time to mount the high-horse, and I therefore said he had read the Khédive's firman, and I wished to know what answer he had to give to it. If he was ready to obey it, good : I wished to start to-morrow morning, and I should write to Nubar Pasha to that effect. If not, I would return to Suez on board the 'Erin.' He replied that he would study the contents of the firman and let me know. But I said this would not do—I must have his answer directly.

I then asked Captain Sciassar to thank the Haz Bashi for his politeness in accompanying Mr. Milne, and wished to know his name in order that I might have the pleasure of mentioning him to the Khédive. It is Mohammed Mahmūd, Muhafiz of Akaba. This I duly noted down. While I was thus engaged the Sheikh wanted to speak to me, but I told Abu Nabut he must wait, as I was engaged. When I had done with the Muhafiz, he took his leave with Captain Sciassar, and then I sat down and told Abu Nabut I was ready to attend to the Sheikh. The latter now stood up, and, with the strongest protestations and asseverations, expressed his readiness to take me everywhere I pleased to go, to supply me with camels and horses

if I wanted them, and to place himself and all about him at my disposal. I said I was satisfied, and it was settled that we are to start to-morrow morning early; and so he left.

Now as regards Milne's explorations of the day. He tells me he went some two miles up Wady Ithem, and saw *no* "three low peaks"—nothing but high granite mountains. He ascended the winding valley to a height of 900 feet, and then went up the side of a mountain some 600 feet more, but could see nothing before him but lofty granite mountains. I cannot understand how Dean Stanley could have been so mistaken. I am therefore so far disappointed: especially as I shall have to travel some six hours before I get to *the plain* described by Burckhardt—whose veracity and accurate descriptions are unquestionable—as being covered with "flints," and which I believe to be the *Harra Radjlâ*. Thus nothing has occurred to affect my views generally. I can only say I should have been misled by Dean Stanley's description.

It is blowing very hard, and the Captain is obliged to get up his steam in order to prevent the ship running on shore. We may congratulate ourselves on being out of it.

CHAPTER VIII.

JOURNEY INLAND—EXPLORATIONS IN ARABIA PETRÆA—DISCOVERY OF THE TRUE "MOUNT SINAI"—JEBEL BÁGHIR, OR MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT—RETURN TO EGYPT THROUGH MITZRAIM.

January 30, 1874.—Yesterday evening I made up my letters and gave them to the Captain of the 'Erin' at half-past five o'clock, but the weather was so bad that the boat could not come off from the ship to take him on board. Milne made up a box of stones (geological specimens) we have collected for the Captain to take to Suez and leave in charge of the P. and O. Company's agent there. At 8 P.M. Abu Nabut came to me for more money, saying the Arabs were "eating him up;" so I gave him five pounds more. Then I went out to look at the weather. It was rather calmer, but still not sufficiently so for the Captain to go on board. I found the sentry again at my tent door, with four others picketed; the Sheikh's spear being also stuck in the ground between the two tents; so that if we are now not protected enough it is a pity.

The Captain took tea with us, and told me the story of the little 'Erin.' She was built in 1856 for Bazaine's Company at Constantinople, and came over to Alexandria, where she was laid up for several years; till one day McKillop Bey was induced to buy her to use as a tug. She was, however, not found strong enough for the work, so a tank was put in her, and she was employed to carry water to the ships; but as she consumed *at least* one ton of coals for every ton of water, this did not pay. On one occasion Sciassar, who was in command of her, took water to a Turkish frigate, which only wanted two tons at two shillings = 4s. It cost £5 to carry this on board—namely, one ton and a half of coals at 60s., with oil, &c., for the engine, to say nothing of the ship's own expenses! So this was given up; and Munzinger Bey wanting a steamer at Massowah, it was settled that she should go to him, when *I* came in the way. But she is unfit for Munzinger, and unfit to have brought me here, as her bottom is perfectly rotten and not thicker than a sheet of paper. When painting her, the brush actually went through the iron, so completely is it rusted. It is quite a miracle that we reached Akaba in safety. Of course the Khédive knew nothing of this, or

he would not have given her to me; but the authorities ought to have known.

It will be high-water here to-day at about 4.30 A.M., so Captain Sciassar reminds me that I shall want to note this for my calculations this day week. I was up this morning at half-past five, and ordered Abu Nabut to begin packing. He demurred, and talked about this being the first day, and that we could not do much, and he had to make purchases, &c. Whereupon I told him that if he delayed it should be on his own account.

There was now a regular row between Abu Nabut and the Sheikh of the Aluwìn, into which the former wished to bring me. He pretended that I was to pay for the Sheikh's escort, and also for the camels which he insists on forcing on him. Those that Abu Nabut has engaged belong to the Towára tribe, and have therefore no right to go on the ground of the Aluwìn. I think Master Abu Nabut has made a mull of it; but that is no affair of mine. I blew up Abu Nabut furiously, and told him I would report him when I got back to Cairo. The contract is that he is to pay everything, and I hold him to his contract. The Captain was fortunately still here, and he spoke seriously to him, telling him how unreasonable his conduct was,

and that if I was content to give *him* money to pay the Beduins with, he should receive it under protest, if he pleased, and then refer the matter to the Consul in the usual way. And so it was settled that I should give him ten pounds more, which he handed over to the Sheikh—half for an escort at twelve dollars a head, as agreed with the Khédive, and the other half for the camels, which he does *not* furnish, and so all was arranged peaceably.

Other money matters had, however, to be agreed upon by Abu Nabut, causing no end of quarrelling and noise. Among other things, the Muhafiz desired to be paid for the guard he had placed over us. If we had gone into the fort as he offered, there would have been nothing to pay, so he said; but as we chose to encamp outside, it was his duty to place a guard over us, and these must be paid. Abu Nabut offered ten francs, with which they were not satisfied; but at length it was taken, the Captain of the 'Erin' saying that when we came back to Egypt it should be seen into.

At length the camels were loaded, and we were off at 8.15 A.M. Captain Sciassar remained to see us start. He was exceedingly kind, and has been very useful. I hope the letters I have written about him will be of service to him, for he is a very

good fellow. I must mention that before we started the Sheikh gave the Muhafiz a *receipt* under his seal for the bodies of me and "my son," whom he binds himself to restore to the Muhafiz safe and sound, barring any visitation of God. I mounted to my *takhterawân* by means of a ladder, which Abu Nabut had made and brought on for the purpose; and really I find my travelling carriage not at all uncomfortable. There is absolutely no fatigue, and the shaking is insignificant at the slow rate of travelling of the camels: no doubt I should be a good deal shaken if they went fast. I shall not trouble you here with the details of the journey, which are duly consigned to my route-book. All I need say is, that we went along at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, and up Wady Ithem, in a north-easterly direction generally. Our escort consisted of the great Sheikh of the Aluwìn and two other Arabs mounted on horses, and there was a Beduin on a camel who carried the great man's spear: we form quite an imposing caravan altogether; and there was the *little* daughter of one of the tribe, who ran along, followed by three young goats almost as big as herself. I busied myself in making notes, and Milne on the back of his camel amused himself reading Macaulay's "Biographical Essays." On our

road we met some Arabs, who went up to the Sheikh and shook hands with him, and then kissed their own hands. He, like our own great people, held out his hand to be shaken or kissed.

At about 2 P.M. we passed Jebel Bághir, which we had seen from Akaba. This is a most important subject, as I shall have to tell you by and by. Soon afterwards the Sheikh stopped at a place where he wished us to encamp; but I, who have made up my mind that he shall obey me, and not I him, said I preferred going on, to which he assented. But I had for some time past during the journey been thinking that my going farther *north*-eastward along Wady Ithem would be to no purpose, as it would only lead me out of my road. If "Mount Sinai" was a "volcano" seen by the Israelites on their way from Succoth [Kellaat-el-Nakhl], it would be to the east, or somewhat to the *south*ward of east; and, therefore, every step I was taking to the north must of necessity be out of the way. I therefore seriously thought of not going further, but of retracing my steps and proceeding up Wady Amran, a branch wady of Wady el Ithem, running to the east or southward of east. Therefore, after I had gone a short distance further than where Sheikh Mohammed had thought of stopping, I decided on halting at a spot

behind a mountain screened from the wind, which his was not, as he and every one else admitted. So far all was right.

On the road the Sheikh and I had kept apart, each standing on his dignity; but shortly before we stopped he passed me and saluted me, and I returned his salute, and since then we have been bosom friends! And one of the results of our alliance is, that he has been telling me the story of Jebel Bághir, which, he says, is a holy mountain; on the summit of which is the tomb of a wely or saint, and at the foot of it is a mosque; and every time the Hadj returns from Mecca to Cairo, sounds are heard in the mountain like the firing of a cannon. This, he solemnly assures me, he has himself heard with his own ears, and, he says, he is prepared to bring me ten, or even twenty persons, who have likewise heard it. Our servant, Hashim, tells me he heard the same story from several persons at Akaba!

I am writing now at 8.30 P.M., and Milne and I have just heard thunder, or *something* which, he says, must surely come from Jebel Bághir! Well, this mountain turns out, in fact, to be the "Jebel-e'-Nūr," which, you will recollect, I heard of at Cairo; and the long and the short of it is, that to-morrow

Milne is going up it, accompanied by Hashim and a couple of Beduins. It is very steep and very high; and from its summit are seen the pseudo-Mount Sinai, that is to say, "Mount Tor," on the one hand, and "Mount Hor," near Petra, on the other; and if any volcanoes are to be seen, they will be visible also from this mountain. Milne and Hashim are to have horses to the foot of the steepest part, which latter they must ascend on foot. Abu Nabut tells Mr. Milne he must take with him a telegraph—or, correcting himself, a photograph—meaning a telescope! The fellow made me laugh till I was almost ill, and I cannot refrain from laughing whilst I am writing about it.

It has now begun to rain heavily, and a Beduin is at work making a trench round our tent. Milne remarked that the only use he has found for the umbrella he bought to protect him from the *burning sun* is to keep off the *rain*. It is thundering heavily, accompanied by lightning.[1] This is the sound from Jebel-e'-Nūr, which, even if I should be disappointed in finding a volcano, will prove a rival "Mount Sinai." Abu Nabut tells the people that I am sent here by the Khédive, the Queen of England, the Emperor of Russia, and all the other

[1] Exod. xix. 9-16.

great people, to find out the 'true Mount Sinai,' and that then all the *Khawājas* will visit it, instead of the traditional Mount Sinai within the Peninsula of Tor, or Pharan, as I prefer to call it. There is nothing like it, except the storm that is now raging in these mountains!

January 31.—It was really a terrific storm last night, the rain coming down in torrents, and the lightning and thunder were frightful, some of the claps being right over our heads. This storm is almost like a judgment upon me, who feel like Balaam, the son of Beor.[1] If this is really the true Mount Sinai, it is as little a 'volcano' as the traditional one is, or else geology is all at fault. The same arguments that Sir George Airy uses to prove that the traditional mountain was volcanic, will, however, apply to this mountain also, for the geological formation of both appears to be the same. On this point I hope to be satisfied during the day; for this morning my companion Mr. Milne is off up the mountain, accompanied by Hashim and a Beduin on horseback, with others on foot. Before he started, and as soon as we had breakfasted, we got out the Royal Geographical Society's azimuth compass, aneroid, and thermometer, and after having

[1] Numb. xxiii. 11.

compared the aneroid with the one Milne has, he took with him mine, and left me his own to compare during the day; and at 8.15 A.M. off he started.

The sky is still overcast, and, unless it improves, I fear he will not do much good; but it is better he should get near the summit, and there await his opportunity. I envy him his trip more than I can tell you; but I feel my utter incompetency to undertake the ascent, and therefore I am resigned.

Sheikh Mohammed tells me that he has heard from his father, who was ninety years old, and who heard it from his father, that in former times signals were made from the three mountains, Jebel Tor, Jebel-e'-Nūr, and Jebel Hârûn (Mount Hor, near Petra), by fires lighted during the night. The view from the summit of Jebel-e'-Nūr (Mount Bághir) is most extensive, and Milne, with his azimuth compass, will take the bearings of all places visible from it. He will, in particular, be able to see whether there are any volcanoes within sight: if not, I shall most certainly not go to look for any, as in that case they would be too far off for the position I attribute to Mount Sinai. I have *enough* in this Jebel-e'-Nūr. I spell the name with our English 'J' instead of the German 'Dj:' and I shall write *e' Nūr*, instead of *en Nūr*,

which is the usual, but, I think, needless way of representing *el Nūr*,—the proper Arabic spelling being Jebel-el-Nūr. You know the Koh-i-nur is spelt with "i," the meaning of the name being "Mountain of Light" in Persian, as *Jebel-e'-Nūr* is in Arabic. Do you not think, dearest Milly, that I have been highly favoured ?—for, should I not succeed in finding a volcano, I shall, at all events, have found a "Mount Sinai" precisely where I have said for so many years that it ought to be found. I expect that the summit of this "Mountain *of Light*," will have been visible to the Israelites on their march all the way from Kellaat-el-Nakhl, where I place Succoth, and through which place I shall have to go on my return to Suez.[1]

The reason why Abu Nabut has joined the Emperor of Russia with the Queen of England as being interested in my researches is, that when at Akaba I was telling him of the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh with the Grand-Duchess Maria, and of the alliance between these two great nations. He is a man of vivid imagination, like our old dragoman, Mikhail Hene, hence his mistake. But after all, you see he was right about *Jebel-e'-Nūr* at

[1] On his way from Akaba to Suez, Dr. Beke mentions the *extensive* view of the summit of Mount Bághir and the head of the Gulf of Akaba "from Ras el Satkh." See page 455.

Cairo, only when pressed for explanations he could not give them. I am now writing in my tent alone, very happy, but very cold ; however the sun is brightening, and I trust it will turn out fine after all. The scene from my tent door is very grand and imposing, but still solemn and peaceful withal. The little Arab girl who came with us is sitting up on the side of the mountain in front of my tent door, looking after her goats, which are browsing near her.

During the past night Abu Nabut had his tent full of Arabs, who all came swarming in out of the rain. It ran through our tent, and the trench outside had to be deepened round it. You know all about this from your experience in Syria and Abyssinia, and will understand the discomfort and the difficulty we have in keeping the water from flooding the inside of our tent. My man has been for some more tobacco for Sheikh Mohammed. He is now so amiable and obliging that the least I could do was to send him a small packet. He came to my tent door this morning to wish me 'good night'—his English extending only to 'good morning' and 'good night,' which he does not always apply properly—like Abu Nabut with his 'telegraph' and 'photograph.' Milne did not forget to

take his '*telegraph*' with him, as the poor old fellow calls it.

With this and his other instruments, and his hammer and his drawing-block, box of paints, and my brandy flask, &c., he was pretty well loaded for such an ascent. But he is a famous fellow when there is work in hand, and turns to it like a man. He is really a very clever young man, and invaluable to me on this journey, and I am anxious to give him full credit for all he does. He feels that he is working for himself not less than for me, and in a good cause. I hope and trust it may bring us both good; *but I am more than fifty years older than he is, and my life is now almost spent.* I gave Milne my pocket-flask filled with whisky, as he may want it, for he will find it dreadfully cold up there: in this respect I do not envy him his trip. How thankful I am to have some one so competent to do my work for me. But there is still a great deal of work to do, and here I must positively remain till I shall have been able to make proper observations; and although the glass is rising and it promises to be fair, I fear that Milne will not have been able to do anything (or little) to-day, on account of its being so overcast. I must give a full account of '*my* Mount Sinai.'

Abu Nabut has a regular poultry-yard round the door of his tent—he having let his fowls, some fifteen or sixteen, and a turkey, out of their coop: I will do him the justice to say that he feeds us well, infinitely better than Mikhail did when we were in the Holy Land. We have always soup, boiled and roast, sweets and dessert!! Only think of that in the Desert. It is almost as good as you and I had in Abyssinia at the foot of the Shumfaito Mountain, when going up the Taranta Pass to Halai. I allude to the (tinned) rump-steak, with oyster-sauce, and plum-pudding, the latter made by our old cook, and carried all that distance from home.

I am sorry to see the 'glass' going back a little; by this I mean the aneroid, which acts as a barometer. I see that the Sheikh's spear is laid on the ground at the back of my tent, in the opposite direction to the other tent in which he himself is: this serves as a safeguard to me on both sides! I am getting very anxious to know what Milne has done. Abu Nabut has just been to inquire how many hours he has been away. I fear he will have done but little good to-day, and if so, we shall have to remain here. It cannot be helped: it is a necessary part of my mission. As it is, I am quite satisfied. I have found *my* 'Mount Sinai,' which turns

out not to be a volcano, or at least cannot be *proved* to have been one; but at the same time cannot be proved *not* to have been one. This will surely please both parties, I hope [or perhaps no one at all]: the anti-traditionists, who will have seen a deathblow given to the traditional Mount Sinai; and the traditionists, who do not like the Scripture History to be deprived of its miraculous character. However, I have still to hear from Mr. Milne whether there are any volcanoes to be seen from the summit. I only desire to ascertain the truth. The prayer that the Hadjis say when they come in sight of this mountain is the *fátha*, or first chapter of the Korán—"Bismillah er rakhman er rakheem, Alhumdul-illah," &c.

1 P.M.—I am sorry to say it has just begun raining again. A Sheikh of this neighbourhood has come into the camp, who tells me that Mount Bághir has always been known as the "Mountain of Light." At the foot of it is the mosque or praying-place of Ali ibn 'Elem, a famous saint from Jaffa[1] or its neighbourhood, who (so Abu Nabut says) has a large mosque there; and at the very summit of this mountain is a place of sacrifice surrounded with stones, where may be seen the horns

[1] In Chapter ix. it will be seen that this information was correct.

(and bones?) of sheep and goats sacrificed there. If such be the case, Milne will have something to say on the subject.

As I was noting the saint's name down in my pocket-book, Sheikh Mohammed looked with curiosity at the 'style' with which I was writing, as being something unusual; so I took a bit of paper out of my pocket, and wrote on it with the style, but of course without making any mark; I then wrote on the prepared paper in the book, and likewise, of course, made marks. This astonished him and the bystanders vastly; but they were still more astonished and amused when I took one of Bryant & May's safety matches and rubbed it on the box on all sides without its lighting, till I touched the black side, when it at once blazed up. This, said Sheikh Mohammed, was like myself: I looked around me at the mountains on every side till I came to the right 'Mountain of Light!' What think you of that for a figure?

This Mountain of Light is undoubtedly a great discovery. And yet, can it be that it has never been known before? It is astonishing to me, and yet we see such strange things to be every day. I wonder what Milne is about? It is now more than 2.15, so that he has been away fully six hours. At half-

EAST SPUR OF "MOUNT SINAI," JEBEL-E'-NŪR (THE MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT).

To face p. 403.

past two I went down to the watercourse in the 'plain' to get a view of the mountain, of which I have made a rough sketch, which will serve if Milne does not make a proper drawing of it; but he must do so, as it will make a beautiful picture, and a most impressive one too, for the view is a really magnificent one. Mount Sinai (Jebel Bághir) would have been visible to thousands or hundreds of thousands of people encamped in the 'plain' here below.

It is beginning to rain again, and I am really getting anxious about Milne and his party; I wish they were back. Anticipating that he would return very cold and tired, I ordered the soup to be got ready for him on his arrival. It was not, however, till 4.25 P.M., that he came in, very cold, but none the worse for a most interesting excursion. Abu Nabut having understood that I wanted the whole dinner to be got ready, it was at once served, and Milne proceeded to pour into my eager and *impatient* ears the particulars and adventures of the day. He went to the very summit, and found the horns and heads of the animals slaughtered there, just as I had been told. It was so cloudy that he could not see very much, but he was able to distinguish a large 'plain' to the north-

east of this, into which, in fact, this valley opens. The view in this direction is shut out by a very lofty mountain on the other side of Wady Ithem.

On inquiring of Sheikh Mohammed the name of that mountain, he told me it is Eretówa (or Ertówa), and Abu Nabut says that when people have been travelling two days or more without water, and then find it and drink it, they say "Eretówa." What this means literally I cannot pretend to say, but I think that we have here the *Rephidim* of Scripture,[1] and this mountain is Horeb.[2] The Great Plain beyond the two mountains will be the encamping ground of the Israelites before Sinai.[3]

It is clear therefore to me, that it is my duty to go up into the plain, which is only six hours from hence. We shall then return on the following day, and passing the spot where we are now encamped, shall go down as far as the junction of Wady Amran, where we shall stop; and on the following day we shall proceed to the opposite (west) side of the Arabah, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, without returning to Akaba itself, where we have no need to go. Thence I would hope to proceed on our homeward journey.

[1] Exod. xvii. 1–3. [2] Exod. xvii. 5–7. [3] Exod. xix. 2.

This *plain* beyond "Sinai" and "Horeb" explains most satisfactorily the journey of the Israelites from Elim. They went down on the west side of the continuation of the range of mountains on which we now are, and returned on the eastern. This plain we are going to see would hold millions, Milne says.

He has brought me a fine piece of quartz from the *very summit* of Sinai, which I have put by for you: It is the same kind of stone as the Brazilian pebbles, of which they make the best spectacles. He is very busy with his specimens and notes, and has not time yet to tell me further particulars; as it is of the first importance that he should place what he has done in order. He fell in with some Beduins up the mountain, who, thinking the Sheikh had come, killed a sheep in his honour, of which Milne had to partake, and as the Sheikh was not there, they smeared his horse with the blood in order to let him know what they had done for him. Altogether Milne is in high spirits at his trip, and with reason. He has found and copied some "Sinaitic Inscriptions" of our own. He tells me that the Gulf of Akaba, though at least eight miles off in a direct line, seems as if one could drop a plumb-line into it, so

close and straight down below it seems. On a rough estimate he was 5000 feet high!

But I will now relate the particulars of the ascent of Mount Sinai (Mount Bághir), in Mr. Milne's own words:—

"At 8 A.M., although it was cloudy and thundering, I mounted the Sheikh's horse, which he lent me, and with five others, two mounted (Hashim and the Sheikh's son), and three Arabs on foot, started for the summit of Mount Bághir. (The Sheikh said 'Good night.') Our way was, for a mile, up a narrow wady, which grew narrower and narrower until it became a gorge. On the way we passed a stone on which were cut the words, 'Ya Allah!' Something else had been written, but it was defaced, in Cufic, or old Arabic characters. In the gorge we stopped to admire a large stone near which the Beduins come and say their prayers. This stone where the Arabs pray is about five feet long and two feet square, and is made of granite. It originally stood upright on the ground, about two or three feet away from the side of the gorge. It is now fallen over, and rests between its pedestal and the side of the gorge. The 'pedestal' is merely another stone on which it appears to have stood.

"At the gorge we had to leave the horses with two of the Arabs, and going up a steep ascent to the left, we came to a low wall across the gorge, which was filled with large boulders; and close above the wall on the right-hand side is a well about three feet across, and about the same to the water in it, which may be two feet of water.[1] By it are two nebbuk trees, one of which overhangs and shades it, and one stunted palm. The well and gorge lie in the line of a dyke of greenstone, which goes far up the mountain, and most probably reaches the summit, only it cannot be traced for the *débris* covering it. Vegetation may here be said to cease, for, with the exception of a few stunted plants and bushes, nothing seems to live.

"Our ascent was now a climb, the rock in places being nearly perpendicular. On reaching the summit of the mountain, we found numerous skulls and horns, and a few bones of animals—it being the custom of the Beduins to come up here to pray, bringing with them a lamb, which they kill and eat on the spot. Round about were a number of low walls, more or less rounded in form, evidently built to keep the wind off. On the ridge on the left-hand side of the gorge, about a hundred and fifty

[1] Exod. xvii. 6.

yards distant from the well, we came to a pile of large rounded boulders of granite, on several of which were inscriptions,[1] which I copied as well as my cold fingers would allow me to do. The stones, which were much weathered, were externally of a dark-brown colour, against which the inscriptions stood out and made themselves visible from their being of a somewhat lighter colour. Before reaching the summit we found snow in the crevices, and, for the sake of saying I did it, I snowballed Hashim, who joined 'warmly' in the sport. Whilst we were at the top it hailed and snowed, and was bitterly cold, and it was as much as I could do to take a few angles with the azimuth compass. My companions made a fire, and it was only by continually warming my fingers that I could do anything. Akaba seemed just below my feet, but on so diminutive a scale, that I failed to detect the castle among the palm-trees, the general outline of which alone was visible; the landscape in other directions was almost blocked out by banks of cloud, rain, and fog.

"Coming back—which was on the opposite side of the mountain (which is about 5000 feet high), and far easier than the ascent—we reached a valley,

[1] For illustration see p. 422.

where we fell in with some Beduins, who thinking it was the Sheikh who was coming, had killed and cooked a lamb, which was ready for his reception, and of which I had to partake. It was a filthy, dirty mess, quite tough and scarcely fit to eat; but I was afraid I should offend them if I refused. It is the custom whenever a Sheikh comes to give him mutton and milk. As it was not the Sheikh, but only the Sheikh's horse, they daubed the animal's back, just behind the saddle, with stripes of blood, to show the Sheikh, when he got his horse, what they had done for him.

"We went into one of the miserable tents to partake of their feast, and squatted down in front of a small fire, and got nearly smothered with the smoke. It was so low that one can only crouch down in it. It consists of a black cloth made out of goats' hair by the women, and is supported by six or seven sticks, with a rope along them, the cloth being pegged with small wooden skewers over the rope. It is a loose, slack, comfortless affair, open on one side, and on the others protected with heaps of bushes. A bit of cloth hanging down the middle divided us from the women, children, and goats, which are all mixed up together. Several of the children were almost naked, having

merely a bit of cloth thrown over their shoulders. I never saw such a picture of dirt, misery, and want. Their all would seem to consist of a few dirty rags, a bit of cloth for a tent, and a cracked wooden bowl in which they served their meat, which of course we had to tear in pieces and eat with our fingers. Eight hours after starting I arrived at our tents tired and cold.

"Mount Bághir is one of the loftiest peaks of the range of mountains on the east side of Wady Arabah and the west side of Wady Ithem, overhanging the latter. It consists of a mass of red to pink granite, which in places where it is weathered has assumed a dark brown hue. Where it is disintegrated the felspar and lighter mica have to a great extent been washed away, leaving a rough gravelly surface of quartz, which is of course only superficial, crushing under one's feet as one walks along. This granite contains but little mica as compared with other granites, and there are places where the rock consists of quartz and massive felspar alone, no mica being visible.

"On the north-west side of the mountain a portion of the granite looks, at a distance, like a brownish yellow coarse sandstone, weathering with rounded surfaces. In this, numbers of cavities can be seen,

generally ranging in size from a cocoa-nut to a man's head. On striking the rock with the hammer, it has not the usual clear ring of a solid rock, but gives a dull sound, owing to the surface being disintegrated, and tending to split off in flakes, which can be easily separated with the sharp edge of the hammer.

"On the same side of the mountain are many large boulders the size of a house. Several of them are so much disintegrated on their under sides as to form small caverns. One in which I entered was as much as about twenty feet across each way, and ten or twelve feet high at the entrance, sloping down towards the back, the roof being dome-shaped and the sides curved—the absence of angular forms showing the granite to have flaked off in curved laminæ. The peaks on the summit of the mountain are composed of granite, the hollows between them marking the position and direction in which the mass is traversed by dykes. And it may be stated as a general rule *for this mountain*, that the dykes do not protrude above the granite, but all tend to produce hollows. As an exception to this is the dyke on the north-east side of the mountain near the well, which forms a ridge running up the side of the mountain. These dykes are generally of a dark green colour, and very soft;

in places so much so, that, under the hammer, they crumble off like a hard clay. Where one of these dykes is exposed as a hard mass, it appears to be dioretic. They are of all sizes, varying from a foot up to eighteen feet, and perhaps more: the run of them being four or five feet. They are numerous, but not so much so as on the mountain towards the north, looked down upon from the summit, where innumerable dykes are to be seen streaking in parallel lines the entire ridged surface of the mountain."

Bághir and *Erétowa* ('Sinai' and 'Horeb') are, I now fancy, two of Stanley's 'three *low* peaks.' We shall be able to decide this when we get down into the Arabah.

February 1.—This morning before starting we made preparations for taking the elevation of this place by Captain George's mountain barometer, and also by boiling-point thermometers. We therefore had the tent cleared after breakfast, spread a sheet on the ground to catch the mercury spilt, and opened the case, when, to our great annoyance, we found the tube for the mercury broken in half. I had been careful in not having the instruments undone before we wanted them for use. Here, where we really wanted the barometer, we found it useless. We put this then aside, and rigged up the boiling-

point thermometer, but, when we unscrewed the spirit lamp, we found it dry, and there was no supply of spirits. So this too was a failure! We tried to boil the instrument in a saucepan of water, lighting a fire for the purpose; but the water inside the case would not boil; so we took the thermometer out, and boiled it naked in the water, as I used to do, you will recollect, in Abyssinia. It gave 209°, equal to somewhere near 1500 feet elevation. But this will have to be calculated when I get home. So the instruments from the Royal Geographical Society have not been of the service I anticipated. However, Milne has an aneroid as well as myself, and between the two we shall come quite near enough to the truth.

Before we started, the Beduins who accompanied Milne up the mountain yesterday came for bakhshish. This Abu Nabut gave them through the Sheikh. I know not how much; but they were dissatisfied, as usual, and he had to add to the amount. Hashim explained to me that the Sidi Ali ibn 'Elem, about whom I wrote yesterday, has his tomb or mosque about half-way between Jaffa and Haifa.

We started at 8.15 A.M., and kept ascending Wady Ithem in a general north-easterly direc-

tion. On the way we fell in with a cannon ball, which, Milne says, weighs about fourteen pounds, but I think it is not so much; and soon after a ball of about an inch in diameter. These are signs of Ibrahim Pasha's presence here in 1840–43. The road all the way up the wady is practicable for carriages! As we came to the top, the mountains seemed to fall and the valley to open, giving us a splendid view of *Mount Shera* in front, only separated from us by a *broad sandy plain*, up which, if I mistake not, the road to Petra proceeds, keeping towards the left. I cannot make the way out at all by the existing maps; at all events, not by the one Mr. Bolton, of Stanfords, sent me out to Cairo.

At 11.45 A.M. we came to the water parting between Wady el Ithem and Wady Hesma, and proceeding along the latter, we stopped at noon in a broad sandy 'plain'! It was the Sheikh who came to a halt, telling us that he could not take us any further, and that if we proceeded we should have to take other camels; that there were a lot of strange Beduins about, and a long rigmarole which I did not care to listen to. I have been entirely disappointed in to-day's journey, which I plainly see tends to nothing, even if I were inclined to go on, and this I am not. I am content with the dis-

coveries I have made. And the best of it is, that the Sheikh says he has given orders to all the Beduins to discontinue the use of the name Bághir (Mount Sinai), and to call it Jebel-e'-Nūr alone. So that in a few years the "tradition" will be that it has always been known by that name, as the *true* 'Mount Sinai,' by people who have never heard of Dr. Beke, just as it is with Harran ; and Cook's tourists will be sent to the "Mountain of Light" as the true Mount Sinai : its being so very little out of the way of the ordinary tourists' route to the Holy Land, and so absolutely free from danger, will induce numbers of them to come ; and my views will doubtless soon be adopted by many both at home and abroad.

We should have stopped here for lunch at all events ; and as it was, I ordered the tents to be pitched for the day, and Milne will go up the neighbouring mountain, Jebel Atághtagíeh, and see what he can see from the top. To-morrow morning we go "bock agen." How by this road we are to get to Jebel Eretówa, of which Abu Nabut spoke last night, I have no idea. I shall not now attempt to follow it up, but shall merely throw out the hint, leaving it for others to follow up if they like. After lunch Milne packed up his traps, and mount-

ing the Sheikh's horse, went off to the mountain with an unpronounceable name like "Ghabaghib," on the way from Harran to Gilead. I must not omit to mention that up here in this plain we found a large patch of decent grass, so we had the cloth (a prayer carpet) spread out on it, upon which we stretched ourselves out, and had a *pique nique à l'Anglaise.* Milne felt so jolly that he said he had no inclination to move afterwards.

When he was gone I occupied myself reading over his geological notes of yesterday. One remark is very striking. He says that the granite rock is wearing away in spheroidal flakes, making *caves* and hollows in it; one he saw would hold twenty persons. In places the side of the mountain is quite pitted with holes. I do not know whether Mount Tor has any of these caves; but the Scripture History requires one, both in the case of Moses and in that of Elijah. For in Exodus xxxiii. 20–23, we read, "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the 'Eternal' said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:" And in 1 Kings

xix. 8, 9: "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the Mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there."

I cannot make out the country where we are at all. Before us, north-east-by-east, is a white (limestone) mountain called Jebel Hesma, and beyond that is Jebel Shera. Sheikh Mohammed says we are here *half way to Petra;* but Abu Nabut says we are not yet so far: a low hill to the left of Jebel Hesma—also seen from hence—is, he says, half way. I hope Milne will come down with some definite information. One thing is clear, and that is that Burckhardt has given the name of Jebel Shera to what is, in fact, Jebel Shafeh. This will be seen from the following description which he gives of this part of the country at p. 435 of his "Syria and Holy Land." On leaving Ma'an he says:—

"We turned to the S.E., and in half an hour from the Djeylat, passed the fine spring called El Szadeke, near which is a hill with extensive ruins of an ancient town. From thence we descended by a slight declivity into the eastern plain, . . . the same immense plain which we had entered in coming from Beszeyra, on the eastern borders of the Ghoeyr,

here presented itself to our view. We were about six hours south of Maan, whose two hills, upon which the two divisions of the town are situated, were distinctly visible. . . . About eight hours south of Maan, a branch of the Shera extends for three or four hours in an eastern direction across the plain; it is a low hilly chain. The mountains of Shera are considerably elevated above the level of the Ghor, but they appear only as low hills when seen from the eastern plain, which is upon a much higher level than the Ghor. . . . This plain terminates to the south near Akaba, on the Syrian Hadj route, by a steep rocky descent, at the bottom of which begins the Desert of Nedjed, covered, for the greater part, with flints.

(p. 436.) "It might with truth be called *Petræa*, not only on account of its rocky mountains, but also of the elevated plain already described, which is so much covered with stones, especially flints, that it may with great propriety be called a stony desert, although susceptible of culture. In many places it is overgrown with wild herbs, and must once have been thickly inhabited, for the traces of many ruined towns and villages are met with on both sides of the Hadj road between Maan and Akaba, as well as between Maan and the plains of

Haouran, in which direction are also many springs. At present all this country is a desert, and Maan is the only inhabited place in it. All the castles on the Syrian Hadj route from Fedhein to Medina are deserted. At Maan are several springs, to which the town owes its origin; and these, together with the circumstance of its being a station of the Syrian Hadj, are the cause of its still existing. The inhabitants have scarcely any other means of subsistence than the profits which they gain from the pilgrims in their way to and from Mekka, by buying up all kinds of provisions at Hebron and Ghaza, and selling them with great profit to the weary pilgrims, to whom the gardens and vineyards of Maan are no less agreeable than the wild herbs collected by the people of Maan are to their camels. The pomegranates, apricots, and peaches of Maan are of the finest quality. . . . (p. 437.) Maan is situated in the midst of a rocky country, not capable of cultivation; the inhabitants therefore depend upon their neighbours of Djebal and Shera for their provision of wheat and barley."

Palgrave's "Arabia" gives the following account:—

"*Ma'an*, 30° 20′ N. 35° 50′ E.—Before and around us extended a wide and level plain, blackened

over with countless pebbles of *basalt* and *flint*, [obsidian ?] except where the moonbeams gleamed white on little intervening patches of clear sand, or on yellowish streaks of withered grass, the scanty product of the winter rains and snow dried into hay.

"*Wokba Wells*, 30° 15′ N. 36° 15′ E.—The blue range of Sheraa' [bounding the Ghor] was yet visible [behind], though fast sinking in the distance, while before us and on either hand extended one weary plain in a black monotony of lifelessness. Only on all sides lakes of mirage lay mocking the eye with their clear and deceptive outline, whilst here and there some dark *basaltic* rock, cropping up at random through the level, was magnified by the refraction of the heated atmosphere into the semblance of a fantastic crag or overhanging mountain."

Volney, writing at a much earlier period on the same subject, says:—

"Ce pays n'a été visité par aucun voyageur; cependant il mériterait de l'être; car d'après ce que j'ai ouï dire aux Arabes [du Chaik] de *Bâkir*, et aux gens de *Gaze* qui vont à *Mâan* et au *Karak* sur la route des pèlerins, il y a au sud-est du lac Asphaltide, dans une espace de trois journées,

plus de trente villes ruinées, absolument désertes. Plusieurs d'entre elles ont de grands édifices, avec des colonnes qui ont pu être des temples anciens, ou tout au moins des églises Grecques. Les Arabes s'en servent quelquefois pour parquer leurs troupeaux ; mais le plus souvent ils les évitent, à cause des énormes scorpions qui y abondent. L'on ne doit pas s'étonner de ces traces de population, si l'on se rappelle que ce fut-là le pays de ces *Nabatheéns* qui furent les plus puissants des Arabes ; et des Iduméens qui, dans le dernier siècle de Jérusalem, étaient presqu'aussi nombreux que les Juifs ; témoin le trait cité par *Josephe*, qui dit qu'au bruit de la marche de Titus contre Jérusalem, il s'assembla tout d'un coup trente mille Iduméens qui se jetèrent dans la ville pour la défendre." [1]

Speaking of the peninsula, he adds—"Ce grand espace est presque tout occupé par des montagnes arides qui du côté du nord, se joignent à celles de la Syrie, et sont comme elles de roche calcaire. Mais en s'avançant au midi, elles deviennent graniteuses, au point que le Sinaï et l'Horeb ne sont que d'enormes pics de cette pierre. C'est à ce titre que les anciens appelèrent cette contrée *Arabie pierreuse*." [2]

[1] Volney's "Voyage en Syrie et en Egypt," vol. ii. pp. 317, 318. (Paris, 1787).

[2] Ibid., pp. 320, 321.

I must try and put all this right for my map, as the existing maps appear all wrong.

Milne returned about half-past four o'clock from his ascent of Jebel Atághtagíeh, having done nothing of consequence, except to decide positively that there are no volcanoes or lava fields visible. So that "Mount Sinai is not a volcano." I can with a very easy conscience retract what I have said, which is, after all, simply matter of opinion. The matter of *fact* remains the same. We have the "Mountain of *Light*" nearly in the position which I gave to "Mount Sinai" forty years ago! And on this I can hold my ground very well. I am not ashamed to make a clean breast of it. Abu Nabut came into my tent to tell me I should "tankey God" for having let me find *Jebel-e'-Nūr* on the first day from Akaba, and for thus having been saved four or five days wandering to no purpose. What he says is true enough, and yet I should like to make *quite sure* that there are really no volcanoes hereabouts. From the geological features of the country Milne can see no traces of anything of the sort; but volcanic regions are anomalous, and may be lighted on in an unexpected manner.

In the evening I copied out Milne's notes of his visit to Jebel-e'-Nūr, which I have entered in my

INSCRIPTIONS ON MOUNT SINAI (JEBEL BÁGHIR).

To face p. 423.

route book. His original drawings of the inscriptions found near the summit I send herewith. They are of no more *real* value, I expect, than the other "Sinaitic Inscriptions," but they are just as good, and there is no reason why they should not be published. The lines are about three-quarters of an inch broad, and very shallow, perhaps not more than one-eighth of an inch, engraven on rounded boulders of granite, of the material of the mountain, standing up against each other, three facing to the north, and one to the south (at the back).[1]

February 2.—It rained all night, and continues to do so this morning. We cannot move. Happy are we to be in a good water-tight tent.

[1] Mr. Holland tells me that Professor Palmer considers them to be tribe-marks. Writing of Wady Muweilih ("Desert of the Exodus," pp. 354, 355), the Professor observes—"These caves are also covered with the Arab tribe-marks which I have before described, each Bedawi visitor to the place delighting to set his sign-manual on the wall. M. de Saulcy (and, following him, many subsequent writers), who had noticed them in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, calls them 'Planetary signs' (see Dr. Tristram's "Land of Israel," p. 310), and in truth they are not altogether unlike the mysterious astrological emblems on the coloured bottles which adorn a chemist's window.

"These tribe-marks consist in reality of distorted Himyaritic letters, generally the initial letter of the name; thus, the mark of the 'Anazeh tribe is ⊙, a circle with a dot in the centre, the ancient Himyaritic letter, 'Ain, with which the word 'Anazeh begins. The Arabs themselves, being ignorant of writing, are of course unaware of this fact; they consequently designate their tribe-mark by the name of the article it may chance to resemble, *ed dabbûs*, 'the club,' *el bâb*, 'the door,' and so on."

I have been occupied in collecting all sorts of information from the Sheikh and Abu Nabut. They tell me this road has been taken by many travellers; but none of them would seem to have taken any particular notice of Mount Bághir, apparently for the reason given by Abu Nabut, that "it was not noticed in their guide-books." Sidi Ali ibn 'Elem came here to pray because he was sent here by God! This is the answer given me when I ask *how* he came to this particular spot. For the tradition hanging about it I can find no reason given, except that there is *a light* at times seen on the summit, and that noises like those of a cannon are heard when the Hadj returns from Mecca! Those who, like Deans Milman and Stanley, attribute the appearances on Mount Sinai to a severe thunderstorm—and nothing else—do not appear to have taken into consideration the heavy *rain* which would have accompanied it, and soaked the poor Israelites to the skin, unless they had good tents, which I doubt their having carried away with them in their flight from Mitzraim.

When Sheikh Mohammed had given me the information I required, he asked me for some more tobacco. I demurred a little, having twice given him some, which Abu Nabut said he had given to the

other Arabs; and he suggested to the Sheikh that in future he should keep what I gave him for himself; to which the other replied that if he did not divide what he had with the others of the tribe, he would not long be Sheikh! On the road yesterday, Milne made a drawing of Mount Bághir, which he has finished this morning. I do not like it much; but I wished him to finish it at once as I said we must absolutely have a representation of "Mount Sinai." My own little pen-and-ink sketch of the east spur will come in very well in addition. Towards noon it seemed to be clearing up, and we saw snow on the mountains; but it still kept overcast with occasional showers, so that there is no chance of our moving to-day.

Sheikh Mohammed ibn Iját—that is his right name I find—was, on Abu Nabut's suggestion, invited by me to lunch with (or rather after) us. We had some tea with our lunch to keep us warm, for it is bitterly cold, and afterwards the teapot was filled with water for our guest! We were at dessert when he came in. I at once offered him a cup of tea which I poured out, Abu Nabut filling the cup half full with sugar; and he had then a dish of *baccalhâo* or dried fish, stewed with plenty

of sauces, set before him with a loaf of bread. He *began* to eat very decently with a spoon, but soon set to work with his fingers, and made a good hearty meal, taking care to make plenty of noise in eating to show his gentility, and after he had finished he did not fail to say, "Istaghfar Allah," which appears to be the correct expression, and not "bismillah." He had managed to suck his fingers as well as he could. Hashim ought to have brought him water, but as he did not, as he was drawing away from the table, our guest gave a clutch at the end of the tablecloth, and used it as a finger-napkin. His tea he left to the last, except some dates and an orange. In the course of conversation he let us know that he is not in the habit of accompanying strangers, but usually sends one of his under-Sheikhs. But as we came in the steamer, and were specially recommended to his care by the Khédive, it was only proper that he should escort us in person; for all of which we duly thanked him, and then he took his leave.

He, the Sheikh of the Aluwín, has a fine old Persian (Ajámi) sword, which bears the date 118. If this is of the Hegira, it means that it is 1174 years old!! But perhaps the date may be of some other

era. It has inscribed on it the names "Allah, Mohammed, Abubekr, and Ali"—Omar, the second Khalif, is omitted. With respect to Mohammed ibn Ijáṭ, and to Beduins generally, I may here tell you what Professor Palmer says on the subject in his "Desert of the Exodus," p. 297 :—

"I cannot expect respectable and taxpaying Englishmen to enter with much appreciation into the Bedawín question, and I know the prejudice that exists, in this country particularly, against the extinction of a *romantic* [*whence* the romance ?] and interesting race. The sympathy already wasted on the Red man of North America [false sentiment] warns me that I am treading on delicate ground, but I must nevertheless state my belief that the *noble savage* [a savage race is to mankind what the *savage* member of society is to society] is a simple and unmitigated nuisance. To the Bedawí this applies even more forcibly still, for, wherever he goes, he brings with him ruin, violence, and neglect. To call him a 'son of the desert' is a misnomer; half the desert owes its existence to him, and many a fertile plain from which he has driven its useful and industrious inhabitants becomes in his hands, like the 'South Country,' a parched and barren wilderness.

"Several plans have been tried from time to time to make him a respectable member of society, but have signally failed;—missionaries have gone to him, and, so long as they could supply him with tobacco and keep open tent for all comers, have found him sufficiently tractable. But they have made absolutely no impression upon him after all. The Turkish Government once devised a creditable and brilliant scheme, namely, to fill up all the wells in the desert round Palmyra; for a time this kept him out of Syria, and sent him to worry some one else; and so far it answered its purpose. But the Pasha entrusted with the execution of the order planted tamarisk bushes to mark the spots where the water lay, and received a good sum from the 'Anazeh Arabs for the information which enabled them to recover it.

"Ráshid Pasha, one of the most energetic and enlightened officials the Ottoman Empire has ever produced, came near to solving the problem. Shortly after we left the Tíh, he sent word down to Gaza that the Bedawín of those parts must for the future live in huts instead of tents; our friends were acute enough to see that this was a deadly blow aimed at their very existence, and the first fifteen Turkish soldiers who appeared amongst the

Teyáhah were killed. A detachment of troops was sent down, and all the flocks and herds were confiscated, brought to Jerusalem, and sold for a nominal value to the Fellahín. The Bedawín sought and obtained the protection of the Viceroy of Egypt, and thus the far-seeing policy of the Governor-General of Syria was thwarted.

"If the Governments of Egypt, Turkey, and Arabia would but act in concert, and consult the real interests of their subjects, this terrible scourge might be removed, and the Fellahín relieved from the constant dread of rapine, and freed from the *sic vos non vobis* misgivings with which they now till their ground. They would then become a more contented and honest people.

"I do not advocate a war of extermination against the Bedawín, because I do not think it policy to destroy so much muscle which might be made serviceable to the community, and I have still, even in the days of mitrailleuses, some old-fashioned notions about the sacredness of human life, but I would put an end to their existence *quâ* Bedawín. The Bedawí regards the Felláh with unutterable scorn. He has a constitutional dislike to work, and is entirely unscrupulous as to the means he employs to live without it; these

qualities (which also adorn and make the thief and burglar of civilisation) he mistakes for evidences of thorough-breeding, and prides himself accordingly upon being one of Nature's gentlemen. [And we encourage him !]

"Camels and sheep are, as I have before said, the Bedawí's only means of subsistence, and so long, then, as he lives his present unsettled life, and can support himself with the milk which they produce, he is independent of all occupation save plundering. The effect of this is, that the soil he owns deteriorates, and his neighbours are either driven away or reduced to beggary by his raids and depredations. If the military authorities were to make systematic expeditions against these tribes, and take from them every camel and sheep which they possess, they would no longer be able to roam over the deserts, but would be compelled to settle down to agricultural pursuits or starve." [They would prefer this almost.]

"The superior advantages which the peaceful agriculturist would then possess over them would curb their unreasonable pride, and the necessity for keeping pace with him, *if they wished to live at all*, would bring out the resources of their undoubtedly keen intellects ["Eutopic!"]. They might

thus be tamed and turned into useful members of the community. Such a plan would probably entail some hardships and injustice at first, but a virulent disease requires a strong remedy, and we must not wince at the application of the cautery to cure the plague.

> '*Οὐ πρὸς ἰατροῦ σοφοῦ*
> *θρηνεῖν ἐπῳδὰς πρὸς τομῶντι πήματι.*'
> —*Sophocles*, Aj. v. 579."

In connection with this important subject Colonel J. C. Gawler wrote a very interesting "Letter to Sir Moses Montefiore," which contained much valuable information ;[1] and as this question, as affecting so seriously Syria and Palestine, cannot fail to call for grave consideration and for some adjustment before long, let us hope that a brighter future is yet in store for the Holy Land.

But to return to the subject of my journey. I am so cold that I can scarcely hold my pen. Milne has been *shading* my sketch of the mountain, and has spoilt it, I tell him ; but, in fact, he has improved and secured it. It makes a very pretty picture, I think. This afternoon, as Abu Nabut was sitting outside over a fire with the Sheikh of

[1] This "Letter" was read at a meeting of the Board, held at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Vestry Chambers, Bevis Marks, and printed by Werteimer, Lea, & Co., 1874.

the Towara Arabs, who has supplied our camels, he made the *amende honorable* to me. He told me of his contract with the Sheikh, which was, that he should find the camels for the journey to Akaba, and that then I was to go excursions from thence into the neighbourhood, returning at night to Akaba. I told him how absurd this was, as in the contract it is expressly stated that he was to take me as far as Jebel-e'-Nūr and Marghara Sho'eib, and that if I had not happened to go to Madian (Midian) in the steamer, I might have required him to take me as far as Marghara Sho'eib. He admitted this, and said he had no thought of bringing the matter before the Consul, but would be satisfied with whatever I said and did. All he desired was to give me satisfaction, and to obtain a testimonial from me, which would let the world know that he is not dead, but that he is the same Abu Nabut who accompanied Lepsius on his travels, &c.[1] So all this is settled in the most amicable way possible.

[1] In substantiation of Abu Nabut's assertion, I may quote the following from Professor Lepsius's "Letters from Egypt," p. 232 :—

"We have now a servant from Derr, the capital of Lower Nubia, who speaks tolerably good Italian, is animated and intelligent, and is a great assistance to me in acquiring a knowledge of his own dialect, the Mahass. I have sometimes tormented him with questions in the boat for five or six entire hours in one day, for it is no

February 3.—It did not rain when we retired to rest last night, and I was in hopes it would be fine, as the "glass" is rising a little; but in the morning before daylight it began to rain again most heavily. This is dreadfully annoying and distressing to me, as the delay is so important. At the same time there is this consolation, that it convinces me more and more that the Scripture account of the Delivery of the Law does not describe a mere thunderstorm. The Israelites without tents could never have withstood it. It is now nine o'clock, and we cannot start yet. It is very unfortunate, for I want to be down on the Red Sea (at Akaba) on the twenty-first day of the moon, Friday or Saturday next, in order to witness the phenomena corresponding to those of the passage of the Israelites through the sea. I am now afraid I shall not be there in time. Thus one is the slave of circumstances; or rather, we cannot control events, which are at the disposal of *One* above us.

small trouble for both of us to understand each other about grammatical forms and inflections. He has, at any rate, at the same time acquired more respect for his own language, here everywhere considered bad and inferior to the Arabic, and which it is thought one ought rather to be ashamed of."

And on page 241, when alluding to the "Wadi Nuba" of the maps, he says—"Neither our Nubian servant, Ahmed, a native of the district of Derr, nor any of the people who are settled in the country, are acquainted with this name."

All that I now long for is, that I may get down to the Red Sea in time.

Seeing there was little chance of its being fine, we made up our minds at eleven o'clock to start. So we had a hurried lunch, loaded the camels, and were off in the rain. My *takhterawân* had its cotton and then its oilcloth cover put on; but as the rain came principally in my face, I had to put up my umbrella, and wrap up my legs in my railway rug. My overcoat I had already put on, so that I managed pretty comfortably, though it was miserably cold. Before starting, Sheikh Mohammed ibn Iját remarked, that whenever he was asked who discovered Jebel-e'-Nūr he would answer "Hakim Beke."

When we started we were among the clouds, which we got in part clear of as we descended. Approaching Jebel-e'-Nūr—or, as I shall now call it, "Mount Sinai"—it stood out majestically before us, but with at least half its height enveloped in, and hidden from us by clouds. The views of this mountain are far more imposing than those of the "traditional Mount Sinai." It stands out quite distinctly, and might have been viewed all round by the Israelites encamped at its base—that is to say, towards this side, from which they must have approached it coming from the south.

It was only just 2 P.M. when the Sheikh came to propose that we should stop and encamp. We were far from as low down as we were on January 31; but he said that it was a good *sandy* spot, where we should be dry, and this we should not be at the lower station. So at 2.15 P.M. we stopped. It had cleared up a little on the road, though I can hardly say we were free from a thick mist; but scarcely were the tents pitched when it began raining again. We have descended about two hundred and fifty feet from the last station. On opening my portmanteau, I found the water had entered it, owing to its having been loaded bottom upwards on the camel. I have told Hashim to look to this in future.

There is not much we can do here to-day; but I am thankful we are so much nearer the head of the Gulf of Akaba. I am assured by the Sheikh that we shall be there *to-morrow*; but I doubt it. I must remain at the head of the Gulf till the time of the moon corresponding to that of the passage of the Israelites. It will make an important feature of my narrative, as being a *matter of fact*. If I were to leave beforehand, it would be matter of speculation and opinion, whereas by remaining I shall have *facts* to narrate.

February 4. — Better weather this morning, though it is very cloudy and threatening. Last night I had a long talk with Milne about the results of my journey. He does not at all like our returning without a volcano. I say that the volcano, though almost a vital object with me, is in truth but of secondary importance. My desire is to interpret the Scripture History truly. I *believed* I should find a volcano where I placed Mount Sinai. I find the "Mountain of Light," but no volcano. I am therefore bound to confess that I was in error as regards the physical character of Mount Sinai, and that the appearances mentioned in Scripture were as little volcanic as they were tempestuous. Milne, who looks at the matter in a purely scientific point of view, says he would find a volcano first, and then endeavour to see if the Scripture History could be fitted into it. But this I cannot do. Even at the cost of the total prostration of mind I *must* believe in the Scripture History, and dare not twist it to suit my own views. I am like the Roman Catholic: I must not allow reason to interfere with my belief. The result however is, that to satisfy my companion—and I cannot deny some doubts of my own still—I have decided on going a little way up Wady Amran to-day, and

sending Milne alone to the top of it, to see what he can see in that direction.

To-morrow, please God, we will go down to Akaba. Accordingly, we started at 8.15 A.M., and at nine o'clock we passed our encampment of January 31st. Soon after this we saw one of our Beduins fetch water out of a rock! We were passing under the east end of Mount Bághir, when I saw a man carrying a *zemzemiyeh* and a tin can ascend the mountain, stepping from stone to stone till he came to an immense mass of rock as big as a house, unto the top of which he ascended, and then began ladling the water out with his can and filling his *zemzemiyeh*. Though we could not see it from below, there was evidently a hollow in the upper surface of the rock where the rain-water accumulated; and being known to the people here, it serves them as a supply.[1]

At 10.30 A.M. we came to the junction of Wady Amran with Wady Ithem (Etham),[2] when a long talk took place between Abu Nabut and Sheikh Mohammed, accompanied with gesticulations and cries, in which half a dozen others joined; the upshot being that the Sheikh wanted to be paid more. We were now going into the country of another

[1] Exod. xvii. 6. [2] Exod. xiii. 20.

tribe, and they wanted coffee, tobacco, and money, and Abu Nabut had none of them; and a deal more. When I was appealed to, I said that all I wanted was to be taken up Wady Amran, in accordance with the Khédive's firman. If the Sheikh refused to take me, I should return to Misr and tell the Khédive. I had nothing more to say. So, after some more quarrelling between the two, we went on, and in an *hour* came to a halt.

It was now a question as to my intention. Did I mean to go further up the valley to-morrow? If so, they must send down to Akaba for rice and other supplies. I answered, "No:" but that after luncheon Mr. Milne would go up the valley, and look at the rocks, &c., and to-morrow, please God, we would all go down to Akaba. This arrangement gave general satisfaction, and at half-past twelve Milne went off on foot with one Beduin. Hashim caught cold yesterday (I don't wonder at it) and is unable to go. The Sheikh was most amiable. He said he was ready to do everything out of respect for me; but, when it came to the scratch, he would do nothing. He says that he is not now the Sheikh, but my servant, and a great deal more—the *fin mot* being that he wanted some tobacco. I gave him two packets; and as Milne's guide, a worthy old

fellow, who accompanied him on all his excursions, is always begging for tobacco, I gave him a packet "on the quiet" to give to the old man on the road. It is surprising how I bear all this knocking about and rough weather; for I am, thank God, pretty well. The other day, as I was hammering at some stones, I hurt my finger, but I strapped it up immediately with some of Mr. Maw's sticking-plaster, and it is all right again.

3.30 P.M.—Milne returned much sooner than we either of us expected. He seems to have come to the end of the granite, where the sandstone begins, but has seen no signs of any volcanoes. Therefore "Mount Sinai a *volcano*" must be given up. Whilst out, he heard two guns fired. They must have been from the Amrani Beduins, in whose country we now are, and whose fires we saw on the mountains on our right hand as we came along the valley.

The dispute between Abu Nabut and Sheikh Mohammed was about the claim the Amrani will, *or may*, make for our being on their ground, and the end of it was that Abu Nabut agreed to pay thirteen dollars (five-franc pieces) for one day. We have not seen any of them yet, but they will come down, no doubt. Our Beduins will keep watch to-night for fear of accidents. I shall now be glad

to get away from these parts and down to Akaba As far as the result of my journey is concerned, I must be satisfied with the discovery of *Jebel-e'-Nūr* as *the true* "Mount Sinai," just where I originally considered it must be situated, *east* of the Gulf of Akaba.[1] The volcanic theory I must abandon. But I trust I have done enough to satisfy the world generally, and the subscribers to my expedition in particular.

The Harra Radjlâ of Yakut must be much further to the east. Perhaps the volcanoes seen by Irby and Mangles belong to it; but that is no longer my affair. The American Palestine Exploration Fund Expedition will in due course of time attend to this. My work is nearly done. I cannot but feel regret at not finding *all* my views to be confirmed, but I must be thankful indeed to find that *I am right as far as the main point is concerned.*

I must tell you that all the Sheikhs wear red garments, which are given to them by the Khédive, both the Aluwín and our Towára, in whose hands I hope to be to-morrow. These are a very decent lot, on account of their immediate proximity to Egypt, and from their having during so many generations had the

[1] See "Origines Biblicæ," pp. 194, 195, London, 1834; and "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 44.

charge of pilgrims and tourists visiting the traditional Mount Sinai (Mount Tor), and the road between Suez and Akaba being in their country. As I expected, two of the Amrani Beduins have come into our camp. Sheikh Mohammed has told them that we are on a visit to his country under his escort and protection, and that *en passant* we just wished to have a look up their valley. I hear that out of twelve of his own party he has sent eight away, so that they are now only four. This I imagine he has done in order that his visit might not have a hostile appearance. Our new friends have heard that I wish to go to Maghara Sho'eib and Madiān, and as these places are within their country, they are prepared to accommodate me; but when Abu Nabut told them I had already been there, they would not believe it.

February 5.—A lovely morning, but very cold: the thermometer at 7 A.M. stood at 38° 5′—six degrees and a half above freezing. We had no more than the two Amrani in camp, but our Towaras kept watch all night, as they said they would. On the way yesterday we met an old woman, who wanted to know what we did on her "premises," the ground that Allah had given her and her people; but we managed to satisfy her. We started at 8.15

A.M., and about nine o'clock the saddle of my hind camel began to give way; so I had to get out of the *takhterawân* to have it put in order. I fancy they have changed the camel. As the camels walk their leaders and drivers cry out "Hottbi," which means "lift up your feet," or, "take care;" and they urge them on by crying out, "Hait, hait! arr-rig!"

At 9.20 we came to the junction of Wady Ithem, where we saw Jebel Bághir, that is, "Mount Sinai," right in front of us. This immense mountain is seen in all directions. Just below the junction we came on a large stone covered with a long Cufic inscription. Our cook's camel having strayed a little out of the way while he was walking on foot, he went after it close to the rock, when he saw this stone and told Milne of it. Milne sent to tell me, but I, having no idea of anything of the sort, imagined that it meant he had been writing or drawing something. So I called out to him to ask if he wanted me, and on his replying "No," which he did under the supposition that I did not care to stop, I went on. But soon after learning what the fact really was, I turned back, and asked Milne to make a sketch of it, which he did. I dismounted and examined the inscription, but could make nothing of it. I should have had difficulty in doing

JUNCTION OF WADY AMRAN AND WADY ITHEM (ETHAM), AND VIEW OF "MOUNT SINAI."

To face p. 442.

so, even had I known the character, the letters being very slightly incised, and they are in part covered over with some other characters, which are perhaps intended for rude Cufic. These being of later date, are of lighter colour than the original inscription, which itself, again, is lighter than the stone. The inscription is on the west or front side of the stone, which is also written on, on the south side. The stone stands on the right-hand side (east) of the Wady, just below the junction. As this is on a now frequented road to Petra, it is strange that it should never have been noticed before. Abu Nabut has passed it no less than fifteen times with European travellers, and Hashim twice. We too, did not see it as we went up to "Mount Sinai," and had it not been for Ibrahim's camel straying, it is pretty certain we should have missed it the second time. As it happens, the stone, if not the inscription, is now secured. I am told of another stone on the other side of the Wady, a little lower down, but it was not till after we had gone by it, and I did not care to return a second time.

At 11.45 we passed the wall across the Wady, which is not so high as I thought, being only seven feet; but the parts nearest to the mountain are

higher. We came down to Akaba more quickly than we went up, reaching a very nice spot at a little distance north of Akaba at 2.15 P.M. We encamped in the midst of a date grove close to the sea, and not far from the head of the gulf.

My first task was to go down to the sea to see how the tide was. From 2.30 to 3.30 it seemed at a stand-still—low water; but when I went down at four o'clock, it had been rising. I marked low water with some stones, and I shall watch high water to-night. There seems to be very little tide, and if I can make it out to-day and to-morrow morning, I think of starting for Suez to-morrow. The palms here grow most luxuriantly, and as I said when I was here before, fresh water is found a foot deep close to the sea. This shows there is a powerful watercourse here like as at Zulla, in Annesley Bay, namely, the united wadies Ithem and Amran.

Our tents were hardly pitched when the Muhafiz and his officers came to welcome us and to hear the news. We told them all about our discovery of "Mount Sinai," the inscriptions, and so on, to their great surprise and gratification. I had coffee served, of course, and while they were drinking it, Sheikh Mohammed came in, and walking to the upper part

of the tent, sat down on Mr. Milne's portmanteau, there being no room elsewhere, for he did not dare to sit upon our beds *above* us, and the lower places were all already taken. His son came in too, and squatted on my portmanteau. Abu Nabut and the Sheikh of the Towara stood at the door; and then commenced a solemn *Kalam* about the "almighty dollar." They talked so hard and fast that I thought it time to interfere, and to say that this being no business of mine, it ought not to take place in my tent. Whereupon they went out to finish their talk. It is five o'clock, however, and they have not done yet—the end of it being that Abu Nabut came to me to beg as a favour that I would give him more money. I gave him ten Napoleons, and, with two pounds' worth of small money, I made up ten pounds, which he accepted most thankfully, as he said he found himself in a difficulty with this extra charge—for which he ought to have provided. I am now cleared out. As he has given me no receipt for the thirty pounds he has had during the journey, I got him to acknowledge it in my companion's presence, who then gave me a written declaration to that effect.

There is some question of Taiyáha and Terabin Arabs, through whose territories we have to pass

before getting into that of our friends the Towaras. Abu Nabut tells me that he will explain all to me when he gets away from this place. He has been away making purchases for the return journey; but to-morrow we do not start. I cannot make my observations here in less time than the whole of to-morrow. Indeed I ought to remain another day, but I shall manage not to do so. We have three soldiers picketed by our tents! In the evening I watched the tide, and found it at its highest at 9.15 P.M., as it seemed to me. It was about the same hour that the moon rose. It was a lovely night, as still and calm as a lake, and the glass is rising, so that it promises to be fair.

February 6.—Before 4 A.M. I was up and out on the beach to observe the tide. I was quite alone, nobody being about, but I could see the soldiers squatting round their fire. Of course they saw me, but took no notice. I stayed by the sea till four o'clock, when it seemed to me that the tide began to turn. It was low water when I went out on the beach, and, as is always the case, there is an interval, more or less long, when the water neither rises nor falls. The distance between high and low water-marks is only six yards, and the rise and fall of the tide, as far as I could estimate it, does not exceed

three or four feet. In rough weather, or at spring tides, the beach is covered some sixteen yards more. It was a most exquisite morning, the sea more still, if possible, than it was when I left it last night, with a high moon overhead and Venus shining brightly close to her. I wish I had the command of language, wouldn't I say something fine!

I returned to bed without disturbing Milne, though he says that he heard me either when going out or coming in; but he does not trouble himself when not called on to do so. In this he is a perfect "soldado." This morning he is off at 8 A.M. to visit the long-talked-of *Maghara!* We have found it at last. I was dreadfully afraid it would turn out to be all talk, and that therefore I might appear to have made a wrong representation in my letters to Sir Walter Trevelyan and to Mr. Poulett Scrope, and others. But, thank God, *there the cave is, close to the head of the sea*, as is stated in Exodus.[1] It will take him all the day to go and return. I had wanted him to help me with my observations, and to take the time of noon from the sun; but I must now do the best I can by myself. The "sun" must be taken on the journey, as he carries the azimuth compass

[1] Exod. xiv. 1.

with him for use. After he was gone I tried to take an observation with the boiling-point thermometer, but could not do it with the Royal Geographical Society's new-fangled apparatus. It is just as it was with us in Abyssinia. So I put the tubes and things aside, and boiled my thermometer in the water itself, as I used to do on both occasions when I was in Abyssinia. I did it well enough then, and so I have done it now! I have got a day of comparative idleness before me, so I think I shall begin writing a letter to the "Times," to be sent from Suez as soon as I arrive there.

11 A.M.—In the midst of my work I have left off to go down and look at the sea again. It is really marvellous. The calm is absolute, and the tide goes gently running down with scarcely any movement. The beach shelves gently out, and may be seen for a considerable distance under the clear water—every stone of the shingle being distinctly visible. I imagine *the tide* can have had very little effect on the passage of the Israelites. I had entered *this* in my diary as the day of the 'encampment by the Red Sea,' and the 'Passage' as having taken place this very night. I think I have made a mistake in my calculation, and that to-morrow is *the day*. If I find myself in error

when I get back to England, I shall only have to add the difference of three-quarters of an hour. Everything is so completely without variation one day from another, that it is never worth while wasting twenty-four hours.

Poor Captain Sciassar had very different weather. It continued so rough after we left Akaba and started inland, that the boat could not reach the beach, and he had to *swim* off to his ship. After this he went only as far as the anchorage behind Pharaoh's Island. Whether he remained there a day, or continued his voyage on the following day, I cannot make out; but I fancy he went on in the course of January 31. Anyhow he will not have more than reached Suez by this time with my letters. I have omitted to say, that on the way down Wady Ithem yesterday, we passed on the left side a rock with several round holes in it, perhaps a foot in diameter, and as much or more deep, with still more numerous smaller holes, two or three inches across. The story is, that in one of the larger holes, a Beduin of Tor (Peninsula of Pharan) found a jar containing gold and silver, which he carried away with him; and that the smaller holes have been made by Beduins of the country, in the

hope of finding other treasures! Milne says that the holes are natural, being caused by the weathering and disintegration of the granite; and I myself saw with him one part of the rock in which the process was going on on a large scale.

2.30 P.M.—I am now occupied with the tide, as it will soon be low water. But there is a little wind, and the sea is no longer so calm, though still it must be called quite smooth. Abu Nabut has got some beautiful fish caught here: some are a bright scarlet and others a beautiful blue, and both kinds are a foot long and more. There are none like them at Suez they say, only in this—the sea that the Beni Israel passed through, as they are already learning to say! It will be a case of "Haran" in a very short time. This morning, when I went out to look at the tide, some large crows and a raven flew across my path on the left hand, and alighted on the shore at my right! Is this lucky?

While I was down on the beach in the afternoon, a fellow with a gun shot one of the ravens on the wing, and crippled him. I did not see the result, but I conclude that he ran after his prey, and killed the bird: more shame for him! The Haz Bashi came in, and was very anxious about Milne's keeping away so long. I do not know what

arrangement Abu Nabut made with him, but I fancy, nay, I am sure, the old vagabond wanted me to make him a present. He talked of having himself given him two pounds of candles, and as I happen to have brought a pound in my trunk in case of accidents, I got them out and gave them to the officer's little boy, a nice quiet little child, who comes always with his father, and who is dressed up in a Haz Bashi's uniform. What the Muhafiz wants of me is, that I should say a word in his favour with the Khédive, which I will willingly do. He and his officers have behaved extremely well. They have had long talks about Moses and Pharaoh, according to the Korân version of the story,[1] which I mean to make use of. When the Haz Bashi took leave of me, he requested that one of the soldiers might be sent to him immediately on Milne's return to inform him of it.

It was not till six o'clock that Milne came back, heartily tired with a journey twice as long as he had anticipated. His day, he said, had been thrown away: there was no *maghara*, nothing in fact to see. But when I came to inquire particulars, I found that there *is* a "maghara," though *he* does not care to call it one; but he has made a sketch

[1] Desert of the Exodus. Appendix C., p. 533.

of it, which will be one of the most effective in my book! He has also made a sketch of Pharaoh's Island, with "Mount Sinai" towering beyond it, and appearing as if it stood directly above it, whereas it is on the *opposite side* of the sea! But what is more important by far is, that he has seen a salt marsh at the head of the Gulf, over which the sea sometimes runs, with a *passage of dry land between the two.* Here it is that the Israelites passed![1] I must go and see this to-morrow. This will make us a day longer perhaps; but this I must not care for. I may, in spite of myself as it were, be placed, on the twenty-first day of the moon, on the very spot from which the Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea took place! I feel that I am not my own master in all this. I plan one thing, and circumstances happen to alter my plans. "Man proposes, and God disposes."

February 7.—Truly I may say this. The wind got up so much yesterday evening that it was quite useless to think of going out to observe the tide, as it depends so greatly on the wind that all results are quite arbitrary. In ordinary times the difference between high and low water on the beach is only about six yards, and the rise and

[1] Exod. xiv. 1, 21, 22.

fall four feet. I turned in last night before nine o'clock, and soon fell fast asleep; but about 11 P.M. I was awakened by the wind knocking the side of my tent against my bed, so I got up, struck a light, and moved my bed. I looked out, but could see nothing, it being very dark, and the wind blowing fearfully. I returned to bed, but in about half an hour, before I could get to sleep, Milne called out, "Look out, Doctor, my side of the tent has come down on me, and the whole will fall on you if you don't take care." On this I at once got up and dressed myself as well as I could in the dark, putting on everything in order to be ready for a rush. The tent still kept up, and as soon as I was dressed I went out, and called Abu Nabut. He roused all his people, and they soon came to the rescue. The storm was now worse than ever, and had they not brought immediate assistance, the tent would surely have gone over. As it was, they lashed the centre pole with a thick rope to a date tree close by, both at the top and in the middle, and strengthened the tent ropes by tying them all together. They did their work very cleverly, as we could see in the morning.

When the tent was righted, a lantern was

brought into it, and by this light we packed up all our things as quickly as we could. Abu Nabut talked of taking down the tent altogether, but by means of ropes and extra cords we managed to keep it up in its place, so that after a while we were able to return into it and lie down.

But in the meanwhile what a scene of confusion and horror—really horror it was. The wind blew most terrifically, and drove the sand with such violence that we were literally smothered with it: and it cut so too! A curious fact was noticed, namely, that the intensity diminished the higher it was above the ground. When we were stooping to our portmanteaus it more than half blinded us, besides actually bruising the skin; but when we stood up it was our legs that suffered instead of our faces.

The sea was perfectly wild, coming up far above the ordinary limits. When I first went out to call Abu Nabut I witnessed a singular sight. *The wind was blowing from the south, or south-west, which naturally heaped the waters up in our direction, so that they ran up the beach, and filling the hollow ground behind, left a tongue of dry land between the two.* This, as the storm increased, and the waters also rose, was soon covered; but when I first saw it *the water*

was on both sides of the land! How forcibly then and wonderfully did this portray and confirm the Bible narrative (Exod. xiv.).

I had been telling Abu Nabut last night about this being the anniversary of the passage of the Israelites, and the destruction of Pharaoh; and the first thing he did when he came to me was to remind me of what I had said; and he has since constantly spoken of this as "Pharaoh's night." I believe he thinks me something wonderful, and as knowing things that no one else does. The effect of the dry sand and wind was such that my mouth and throat were quite parched, and I had to ask for some water to drink. Milne quite independently of me did the same. While they were getting our tent in order, we went and sat down in the other tent in the dark. Through all the strain put on it, our good tent did not give way anywhere; but that of Abu Nabut was, however, much torn in more than one place.

Such a night I think I never experienced in my life. As the day approached the storm abated somewhat, but it was still raging when I rose at seven o'clock. I felt myself quite unwell and unnerved, and on Abu Nabut's coming to me for instructions as to what was to be done, saying, that if we remained

at Akaba, the tents must be moved into some sheltered place, I told him that he might pack up and be off at once, as I did not intend to remain a moment longer. Nothing could be observed in such weather, and therefore I had no object in remaining; besides, I had to consider Milne, who wanted to be back in England by a certain time. Nabut was only too glad to be off, and set to work instantly to strike the tents.

Now came the leave-taking. The old man who has accompanied Milne on his excursions wanted to be paid, as was only right; but Abu Nabut had left me without money, so I emptied my purse, containing some five shillings, into the corner of the old fellow's cloak. He was not satisfied, but had to be, for I could give him no more. Then came Sheikh Mohammed, who begged me, when I saw the Khédive—Effendina—to say that he kissed his feet, and had only been too happy to obey his commands in attending to me. For His Highness's sake he had allowed the Towára with their camels to come into his country; only, in future, he would suggest in the most delicate way in the world that the Towára should bring strangers to Akaba only, and that from thence the Aluwín should have the supply of

these amiable creatures. This latter part was intended for the British Consul, to whom he sent his salâms. As for me, he said he was delighted to have known me, and to have been of use to me in discovering "Mount Sinai." And so, after shaking hands all round, and wishing me all kinds of good fortune, Sheikh Mohammed, with all his "tag-rag and bob-tail," rode away up the mountains. It was now the turn of the Muhafiz. He was profuse in his compliments, as I was in mine, of course; and the end of it was, that he asked me to give him a silver watch as a remembrance of me, and said that if I put it in the hands of the Consul, it would reach him in safety! I assured him that, "I wished he might get it;" and so we parted on the most friendly terms. There was then a long *kalâm* with Abu Nabut, to the effect that, as I imagine, I was handed over into the safe keeping of the Sheikh of the Towára, who is to convey me to Suez and Cairo.

Akaba might be made a large city—was one, in fact, in former times. Like Adulis, it is at the mouth of a large watercourse, so that it has water all the year round; and its numerous date-trees show how luxuriant vegetation of almost every kind might be made here. With water,

anything may be done in these countries. I shall suggest this to the Khédive. Why, too, should not the Port of Akaba be utilised, as in the time of Solomon ?[1]

At length, at 9.20 A.M., we were off on our way home. But before starting Abu Nabut showed me that he deserved his nickname ('the Man with a Stick') by giving one of our Beduins a good thrashing, though they soon made it up. It was now a fine morning, though the sea was still remaining very high. There was no saying anything about the tide. I could see that the water had been more than ten yards above high water-mark, and yet it hardly seems to be quite high water even now.

On leaving Akaba we went along round the head of the Gulf, under some sand banks thrown up by the sea. Date palms and other vegetation covered the Arabah to some distance inland. By and by we came to the commencement of a salt marsh which extends some way up the Arabah. We first passed below a pool of salt water some thirty or forty yards from the sea; and then another larger, which Milne saw yesterday, and which therefore

[1] 1 Kings ix. 26. See Captain Burton's forthcoming work, "The Gold Mines of Midian."

was not caused by last night's storm; then we passed a third, larger still, and nearer. They all seem on a somewhat higher level than the sea, and to have formed by the water being washed over by wind and tide. But presently we came to a little stream running across our path *from the sea* where the ground was lower. It now threatened to rain; so I thought of wrapping myself up, and asked for my railway rug; but it was missing. It was evidently stolen last night by one of the Beduins during the confusion.

As we approached the western side of the head of the Gulf we had on our right hand a flat waste of salt marsh, pools of which were almost in our path, the sand being so rotten that a stick could easily be thrust a yard down. The rains from the mountains run into this marsh, and thence find their way into the sea. I doubt not that the whole of this marsh formerly formed part of the sea, which consequently must have extended further to the north, and the road on which we went may then have formed a shallow or reef. All this may possibly affect the passage of the Israelites. There was a salt efflorescence on the ground here and there a little way from us.

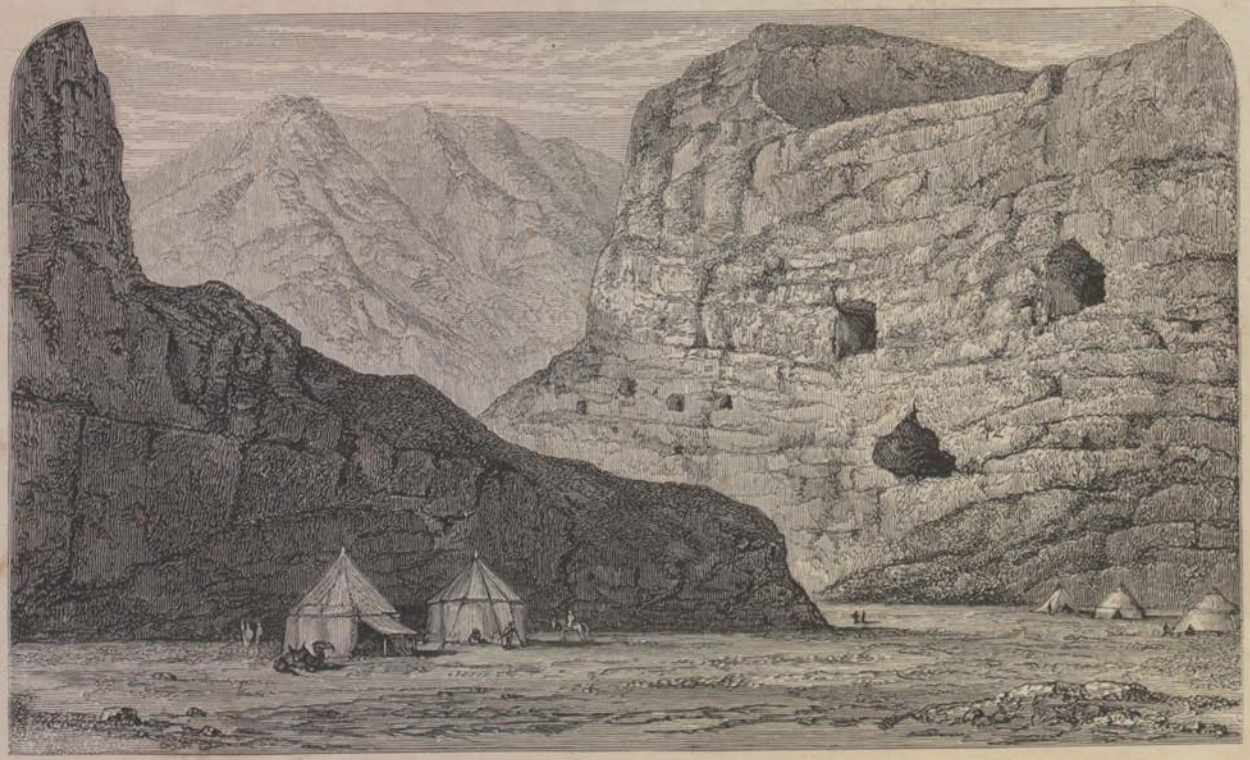
At 11 A.M. we reached the western side of the

sea, and began ascending the mountains. We appear not to have gone up any regular wady; but rather to have crossed the beds of several, running south, our course being somewhat about north-west.

At 11.45 we came to Wady el Mahaserat, marked in the map as Wady el Musry. The map appears to be *altogether wrong.* Up this wady we ascended west-north-west or so, till noon. It now began to rain; but we went on till 12.45, when we stopped to take luncheon.

From Mr. Milne's description of his visit on the 6th inst. to the Maghara, or Cave opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, and from what he there saw, *en passant,* of the limestone formations at the mouth of this wady, coupled with the fact of our *now* finding here several large cavernous openings, he has, you will see, come to the conclusion that the existence of "Caves" (Magharas) opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn is most probable. Mr. Milne says:—

"*Feb. 6th.*—Close to Ras el Musry [Mahaserat], and opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, we get headlands of hard stone projecting, and forming small caves. For the most part this is a bluish grey granitic rock, but there is also a reddish coarse-grained granite, the mica being in plates the size of a half-



PI-HA-HIROTH, THE "ENTRANCE TO THE CAVERNS," AT WADY EL MAHASERAT (MUSRY).

To face p. 460.

crown. Between those two places there is an exposure of a whitish limestone, about a quarter of a mile in length. In parts this is quite white, but the bulk of it is of a yellowish tinge. As it nears the granite rocks of Jesirat Fir'ôn it slopes upwards, as if forming a flank to them. These are very noticeable from their tilted position and their bright pink colour. The exposed limestone in one place may be at least 600 feet high, forming with its cliff and talus an imposing object. It varies considerably in texture, being in places compact and hard, and in others apparently earthy: these latter having intercalated with them several hard bands two or three feet thick. Part of it contains irregularly disseminated light yellowish flints.

"There was no cave seen in this limestone on the very cursory examination I could give it, simply passing by at a distance probably of a quarter to half a mile; but their existence is not improbable, from the fact that when on our journey from Akaba to Suez, we came to the continuation of the same rock, and saw in it, on the face of the cliff, several large cavernous openings. From their height above we could not reach them, and the whole was so shut in by other rocks that the portion visible was very limited.

"The chief motive for my not paying this limestone particular attention was, that I was on my way to a spot which the people at Akaba described as a *Maghara*, or cave, but which in fact (if my guides took me to the right place), is nothing more than a niche formed by two overhanging granitic rocks opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, which, in our acceptation of the word 'cave,' can hardly be considered as such. About ten yards distant from it is a noticeable outlier, also granitic, in appearance resembling one of the outstanding 'needles' so common on the English coast.

"*February 7.*—After leaving the Gulf of Akaba the road slopes upwards, amongst mounds of *débris*, right and left, and under your feet you notice fragments of granitic rocks, and also of limestone, indicative of what is to be found above. After about two hours travelling between much decomposed granitic rocks, we came on the limestone at about 1000 feet elevation, and after continuing a short distance up the valley, with the limestone on our left, and granitic rocks on the right, the road turns suddenly to the left between high cliffs of limestone, where we encamped. In the right hand cliff (north) were the caves, already mentioned on the 6th instant. This limestone has all the appear-

ances and physical qualities of the chalk of the South of England, from which it differs in the fact that it contains bands of *flint stone* and not of flints. The thickness of these bands and their distance apart vary, but they may be taken as averaging four inches in thickness, and four feet apart. The strike of this limestone would indicate that it is continued down towards the limestone or chalk seen by Ras el Musry, lithologically the two being almost identical."

Assuming this, and that Wady el Mahaserat (Musry ?) runs down from the one to the other, then this wady is Pi-ha-hiroth—the "Entrance to the Caverns"—and no doubt other caverns will be found along the course of the wady.[1] [February 14, 1874. Charles Beke.]

We were not yet at the summit of the mountain, but we had a magnificent view of the head of the

[1] Exodus xiv. 1. On Dr. Beke's writing to Mr. Milne (May 7, 1874), asking him whether *other* caves ought not to be inserted in his drawing, he replied :—"The rest of the holes in that chalk cliff were too small to be called caves, and therefore had better be omitted. But observe that along the line of junction of the chalk and granite, which will be up that Wady *Musry*, there is every likelihood of there being more caves. The chalk rock being contorted, as seen in the drawing, and water, &c., percolating through the contortions and breakages, is more likely to produce caves there than elsewhere in the *solid* mass. This can be dilated on. *N.B.*—That chalk is not equivalent to our chalk in age, but only so lithologically.

Gulf of Akaba, with "Mount Sinai" beyond—its summit being hidden by clouds. Here we may well suppose Pharaoh to have seen the Israelites encamped by the sea, as we read in Exodus xiv. 9, 10:—"But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and all his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-ha-hiroth, before Baal-Zephon. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them."

This is an excellent carriage road all the way. At 1.15 P.M. we started again, and in less than half an hour crossed into Wady-el-Satkh, up which we went northwards crossing into another wady, which they still said was Wady el-Satkh. As we were now near the top of the pass, and they say there is no place to stop for some *four* hours more, we encamped here at 2.30 P.M.—a very short day—in the Wady el-Satkh, about half an hour they say below the Ras-el-Satkh, or Nagb. The road was a good deal improved by Abbas Pasha when his mother went to Mecca, and the present Pasha has also been at work upon it.

Dr. Robinson gives the following description of

this part of his route from Akaba to Jerusalem :[1]—

"*April 5th*, 1838.—Having at last made all our arrangements, we left the castle of 'Akabah at a quarter-past one o'clock P.M. . . . Our course lay along the head of the gulf on the Haj road by which we had come yesterday. At 2.40 we reached the foot of the western ascent, where the hills of conglomerate, which we had passed yesterday further south, sink down into a steep slope of gravel, extending far to the north. This we ascended about W.N.W., and at 3.25 crossed the shallow Wady Khurmet el-Jurf, which runs down towards the right ; and then came among low hills of crumbled granite. Beyond these there is again an open gravel slope in some parts, before reaching the higher granite cliffs. At four o'clock we encamped on the side of the mountain, in a narrow branch of the same water-course, called Wady edh-Dhaiyikah. From this elevated spot we had a commanding view out over the gulf, the plain of el-'Arabah, and the mountains beyond.

"The castle bore from this point S.E. by E. Behind it rose the high mountain el-Ashhab ; and back of this, out of sight, is el-Hismeh, a sandy

[1] "Biblical Researches in Palestine," &c., vol. i. pp. 173–175. London. 1867.

tract, surrounded by mountains. But no one of our guides knew this latter name as a general appellation for these mountains. At the south end of the Ashhab, the small Wady Elteit comes down to the sea, having in it the ruin Kŭsr el-Bedawy, bearing from here S. 40° E. More to the south the hills along the eastern coast are lower, having the appearance of table land; while further back are high mountains, and among them the long ridge en-Nukeirah. These extend far to the south, and there take the place of the lower hills along the coast. North of the castle the large Wady el-Ithm comes down steeply from the north-east through the mountains, forming the main passage from 'Akabah to the eastern desert. By this way doubtless the Israelites ascended from the Red Sea in order to 'compass Edom,' and pass on to Moab and the Jordan. Wady el-Ithm now bore E. 1° S., while a mountain further north, called Jebel el-Ithm bore E. 1° N. Then a smaller wady comes down named es-Sidr. To the northward of this was Jebel esh-Sha'feh, N. 70° E.; and still further north our guides professed to point out Jebel esh-Sherâh by Wady Ghŭrŭndel. On this point, however, we had doubts.

"*Friday*, April 6.—The bright morning pre-

sented a beautiful view of the sea, shut in among mountains like a lake in Switzerland. The eastern mountains too glittered in the sun; fine, lofty, jagged peaks, much higher than those we were to climb. We set off at six o'clock, ascending W.N.W. We soon reached the granite hills, and entering among them over a low ridge, descended a little to the small Wady er-Rizkah at 6.25. It flows to the left into the Musry, within sight a little below. Passing another slight ridge, we reached Wady el-Musry at a quarter to seven o'clock. This is a large wady coming down from the north obliquely along the slope of the mountain, and running down by itself to the sea, which it was said to enter just north of Râs el-Musry. Our route now lay up along this valley, winding considerably, but on a general course about north-west. The ridge upon the left was of yellow sandstone, resting on granite, while on the right was granite and porphyry. The scenery around was wild, desolate and gloomy; though less grand than we had seen already. At seven o'clock limestone appeared on the left; and we turned short from the Musry towards the left, into a narrow chasm between walls of chalk with layers of flint. Ten minutes now brought us to the foot of the steep and difficult ascent; so that

this last ravine might well be termed the gate of the pass. The ascent is called simply en-Nŭkb, or el-'Arkŭb, both signifying 'the pass' up a mountain; and our guides knew no other name. The road rises by zigzags along the projecting point of a steep ridge, between two deep ravines. It is in part artificial; and in some places the thin layer of sandstone has been cut away twenty or thirty feet in width down to the limestone rock. Portions of this work have probably been done at the expense of pious Mussulmans to facilitate the passage of the Haj. Two Arabic inscriptions on the rock, one of them at the top of the ascent, apparently record the author of the work. Near the top is something like a modern improvement, a new road having been cut lower down on the side of the ridge, rising by a more gradual ascent. The whole road is said by Makrizi to have been first made by Ibn Ahmed Ibn Tulûn, Sultan of Egypt in A.D. 868–84.

"We reached the top of the steep ascent at eight o'clock; but continued to rise gradually for half an hour longer, when we came to Râs en-Nŭkb, the proper 'Head of the Pass.' Here however we had immediately to descend again by a short but steep declivity, and cross the head of

Wady el-Kureikireh running off south to Wady Tâba', of which it would seem to be a main branch. Ascending again along a ridge at the head of this valley, still on a course W.N.W., we had on our right a deep ravine called Wady er-Riddâdeh, running eastward, a tributary of the Musry. At nine o'clock we finally reached the top of the whole ascent, and found ourselves on the high level of the desert above. During the whole way we had many commanding views of the gulf and of el-'Arabah; which latter, as seen from this distance, seemed covered in parts with a luxuriant vegetation. But we had viewed it too closely to be thus deceived. The point where we now were afforded the last and one of the finest of these views. The castle of 'Akabah still bore S.E. by E., and the mouth of Wady el-Ithm E. by S. At 9.25 we came to the fork of the roads, called Mufârik et-Turk, where the Haj route keeps straight forward, while the road to Gaza turns more to the right."

The Marquis Arconati describes fully Ras Qŭreieh, and Jeziret el Qŭreieh.[1] But he says little of Akaba, except about the castle and its illegible inscriptions.[2] Of the Wady Arabah, in which he spent

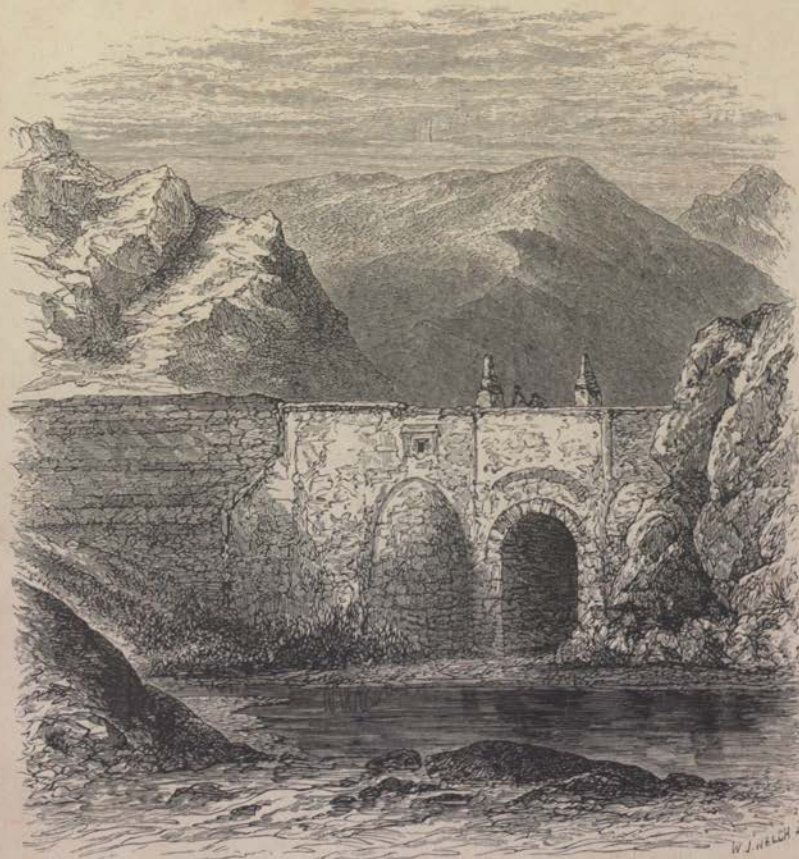
[1] See Diario in Arabia Petrea (1865) di Visconte Giammartino Arconati, Rome, 1872, p. 271. [2] Ibid. pp. 278–84.

some days, *en route* to Petra, he gives some interesting particulars.[1]

February 8.—Last night Abu Nabut gave us some Yemen dates for dessert. He said he could not produce them before, or the Beduins would have devoured them all. He complained most bitterly of their voracity. They have eaten him up two whole loaves of sugar, and the poor man is in a most indignant frame of mind about it. It rained hard during the night, and I daresay there was a continuance of bad weather down below, so that we did well to return. I do not think we have had one single fine day since we left the 'Erin' and commenced our inland journey.

We started at 8 A.M., turning off from the main valley up a siding, and in about two hundred yards came to a bridge over a deep ravine, above which the road ascended the side of the mountain, just like the roads up the passes over the Alps. The road has been worked on like them, and is a very pretty piece of engineering. I imagined it to have been constructed by the present Pasha; but I understand that the whole is the work of Abbas Pasha. Here I was told by Abu Nabut that it would be

[1] See Diario in Arabia Petrea (1865) di Visconte Giammartino Arconati, Rome, 1872, pp. 294, 296, 297, 300, 302, 303.



THE BRIDGE AT EL SATKH.

To face p. 471.

impossible for me to make the ascent in the *takhterawân*, so while our people were loading I walked on for some twenty minutes, when I sat down to rest. When the camels came up I mounted the one Milne usually rides, he preferring to walk a little, and on I rode, at first slowly for nearly an hour, when I came to a magnificent view of "Mount Sinai" (Jebel Bághir), and the head of the Gulf. On the road were stones inscribed with the *fátha*, which I suppose served as milestones.

The road now became more level, and I rode on briskly till 9.50, when I came to the summit of the pass called Ras el Satkh. At this point the pilgrims from Cairo say the *fátha* (prayer) towards my Mount Sinai, which is plainly visible, and they set up stones one upon another as memorials. The mountain is here nearly east—94° 5′ by azimuth compass. The elevation is about 2000 feet. I rested here awhile for the others to come up, and at half-past ten I got into my *takhterawân*, and proceeded over an immense gravelly, which soon became sandy plain, in a direction a little to the north of west. It was almost perfectly barren. At twelve o'clock we stopped to lunch, when I set my watch by the sun, and I found it nearly quite right.

At 12.40 we went on again over the same dreary

plain. Thus far we were told it was all called el Satkh, meaning "the roof," but now it is the Tih—always the same dreary waste, with patches here and there of a little verdure. They call these patches, wadies, with names which I did not care to record; but I could see little difference in the level. On the road we rose somewhat at first, but afterwards the elevation fell again. All the way the sandy surface of the rock was marked with parallel camel tracks, being those of the Hadj! At 2.45 we went more to the north-west, still over the plain, but its extent being limited by low hills. This, we were informed, was Wady Imshash, forming part of the Tih, and so we went on, till four P.M., when we stopped for the night.

I was very thankful to do so, for I was so cold I hardly knew what to do. I actually lost the use of my hands, in spite of my having had silk gloves on, and having kept them covered up as well as I could in the *takhterawân*. Immediately the tent was ready I lay down and went to sleep, which did me good, but did not make me warm. I then went into the other tent, where there was a good fire, over which I toasted myself till the dinner was ready. This, and a fire I have had brought into my tent, have warmed me sufficiently

to enable me to write up my notes and this letter, which I trust you may be able to read, as luckily you can often read my writing when I cannot do so myself. I shall now have a cup of tea and go to bed. It will be cold all the way to Suez!

February 9.—It was indeed cold during the night. This morning the ground and our tent are covered with hoar frost, and the thermometer stood at 6.30 A.M., just before sunrise, at freezing point, 32°. They say that we are in danger of thieves as far as Nakhl, and so our trunks and my writing-desk are taken every night into the other tent. With the Hadj *every year*, goes a man of Cairo, named Abu Haláweh, who knows all the places where the *fátha* is to be said, on reaching which he calls out with a loud voice, "Fátha, Jebel Bághir" —"Fátha, Wady e' Nūr," and so on. And then all the pilgrims repeat together the first chapter of the Korân, which to them is like our "Lord's Prayer." It was a lovely morning, but as it was still very cold, I thought it better to go on walking than to stand still. So I went on slowly with Milne for an hour and a quarter dawdling and occasionally standing still, but always moving on. I wore my *Kefiya* over my cap, and continued to do so the whole day, though not on account of the

cold, but to keep off the sun! It turned out a regular hot day, which we enjoyed after the continued wet and cold we have experienced hitherto. It is cold again to-night, and we are glad to have a fire in our tent.

About half-past eleven a Beduin of the tribe of Héiwi (plural Héiwát) came up to us, and wanted to know what we were doing on his ground. He was a little chap, armed with an old gun, though I doubt if he had any ammunition for it, but he had lots of pluck. There seemed symptoms of a row, and our people took to their swords. Whereupon Abu Nabut took the matter upon himself. It appeared that the Héiwi wanted to supply us with camels. Abu Nabut did not deny his right to do this; but said we came from Akaba on business of the Effendina (Khédive), and as there were no Héiwát there, we took Towáras. That was all very well, he said, but he wanted to supply us now. "All right," replied Abu Nabut; "have you got the camels here?" "No; but I will bring them." "Bring them then," answered Abu Nabut. "I will to-morrow or next day." "But we cannot wait," we said. "But you *must* wait," answered the Héiwi. Then with an air of injured innocence, Abu Nabut came to me and requested me to note

down the name of Suleiman Salim, who wanted to stop the Hakim Bashi travelling for the Effendina, &c., &c. This so frightened the fellow that he decamped. We saw a large number of goats grazing on the mountain-side close by, and therefore there must be several persons there; but there are no camels, and if the Héiwi is gone to fetch them, we, in the meanwhile, continue our way, and by to-morrow shall be off his ground! The tracks on the road of which I wrote yesterday are in part caused by Abbas Pasha having had the stones cleared off there when his mother went to Mecca. What an affectionate son! I fancy he had a little game of his own to play, and made his mamma an excuse so as not to give the Sultan cause of offence.

In a chalk hill which we crossed to-day, he had had a cutting made to lower the ascent. On one side is a stone with an Arabic inscription in commemoration of it, on the other side of the cutting are a lot of inscriptions, or rather rude marks, some of them very much in the style of the "Sinaitic," or of my "Jebel-e'-Nūr." This chalk hill is called Jebel Máujar. On the way Milne found some hematite or *iron* ore. He has given me specimens to show to the Khédive. I shall also have his drawings for the same purpose.

February 10.—A very fine morning, and nothing like so cold as yesterday. At 6.45 A.M. the thermometer stood at 48°. The dress of the Sheikhs is very picturesque with its three colours, red, white and black. On my asking at what time we should arrive at Nakhl to-morrow, the Sheikh said, we could not be there till the day after. On this I blew up, complained of their delay and constant wish to stop, and I finished by saying, I would not pay for more than five days—and even this is one day more than I bargained for at Cairo. We started at 7.50, and had a monotonous sort of morning, the day being fine but not at all warm. In fact there was a cold wind blowing, which made me very chilly in the *takhterawân*, and at last just at noon, I felt myself quite ill. The wind had caught my right arm and hand, though I had *three* coats on, and I had an attack of what seemed like venous congestion. My hand was blood red, with very little feeling in it. I could not hold my style to write.[1]

I got down and walked for upwards of an hour, at times pretty sharply, rubbing my hand and

[1] After the serious illness from which Dr. Beke had so recently recovered, this journey was altogether too arduous an undertaking, and had he had to perform the journey entirely by land, it is feared he would never have reached the "Mountain of Light."

beating it across my chest. At length it recovered its feeling and natural colour, and being now tired, I got again into my carriage, and wrapped myself, especially my right side, in Milne's railway rug, over which Abu Nabut put his thick cloak, so that I felt quite warm. After I had ridden about an hour, we came to Wady Kureis, where is an immensely deep well, and by it a tank which Abbas Pasha had had constructed for the pilgrims. It is nearly one hundred feet in length, and some sixty feet in width, and perhaps half as deep: along one side are troughs for camels. Before reaching this we saw a herd of camels of the Héiwat going down the valley with only one man. At this wady the territory of the Héiwat ends, and that of the Teiyáha begins: this continues to Nakhl, where commences that of the Towára, to whom our people belong. The Sheikh wanted to stop soon after 4 P.M, but I insisted on his going on, as I positively declared I would be at Kala'at e' Nakhl to-morrow, even if we travelled to midnight. So we went on till 5.45 P.M., the sun having set some time, when I was induced to stop on the promise that we should start very, very early to-morrow morning and get to Nakhl by night. I preferred this to going on now; as, if the worst comes to the worst and

we have to go on by night, there will be the castle for us to put our beds up in, without waiting for the tents to be set up. This evening I am all right again, and writing as usual. Milne is dead beat, having *walked* the whole day. He does not much like the camel-riding. I had almost vowed I would never mount a camel again after my experience of 1843 at Tor. But I did not feel any inconvenience from my short ride the day before yesterday. I almost liked it.

February 11.—This morning I was getting out of bed at 6.15, when Hashim came in with water for me to wash : the first time on the journey that I have not been up first—a great disgrace, as I tell them, I the master, and the eldest ! This morning we breakfasted in the open air, in order that the tent might be taken down ; but they were not ready when I was, so I and Milne walked on at seven o'clock. After walking for about half an hour, we saw a few camels grazing belonging to the Terabín, of whom the Teiyáha appear to be a sub-tribe ; they went on before us, and we some time afterwards saw they had one man with them. By and by we came to a large number of camels, probably as many as one hundred, grazing on our left. We did not see any people with them.

Our road was a very monotonous one, like that of yesterday; but it was interesting to me, as it gave me an opportunity—or, rather, I should say, it caused me to make careful observations of our route, as that on the map which Mr. B. sent me is altogether wrong. I never saw anything so bad. I did not want to be bothered with this, but I must. The sun was intensely hot to-day, and we both got our faces burnt frightfully.

We arrived at the Kala'at e' Nakhl at 5.45. My companion, Milne, *walked* the whole way! I was very tired, and went immediately into my tent and lay down, so that I know nothing yet about the place or its inhabitants. It is a kalla'a or castle, like that of Akaba, only smaller, and has a garrison of Egyptian soldiers. That is all I can say at present about it.

February 12.—Very cold again this morning. The thermometer is at 6.45 A.M. 30°. We are now in the great Wady el 'Arīsh—the Wady el Kebir "Quadelquiver," of this part of the world: a great sandy plain between two ranges of chalk cliffs. There is plenty of water, but it runs off, otherwise I do not see why it might not be made as fertile as the chalk hills of Kent. Milne says that the soil is principally composed of lime and

silica, forming a sort of loam, but there is very little alumina or clay. I hear that it is very cold here at all times; and that of the Hadj pilgrims who passed here last month—or rather, two months ago—thirty died from the cold, and seventeen had to be sent back to Egypt. As we did not start so early as yesterday, having to supply ourselves with water, Milne and I went into the castle. It is much smaller than that of Akaba, and as the Hadj is past, there is nothing for the garrison of forty soldiers to do; so their firelocks are hung up in linen cases in the entrance hall, and they themselves are "at ease" in their apartments! There was one fellow sitting on a seat in the entrance wrapped up in his cloak, but he took no notice of us, nor we of him. A man of the place was sent with us by Abu Nabut, and he took us to the top of the castle. The stairs reminded me of those leading up to the Samaritan synagogue at Shechem; so I was on my guard on this occasion, and went up and down very carefully. Our guide was also very attentive to me. On the way up we saw a *sakiyeh* worked by two mules, which draws water from an immense depth, and delivers it into three large tanks. There is another well outside the castle, which can be worked in case of need.

On the terrace above we had a fine view, and Milne took some angles. There is a small village adjoining the castle, where we saw lots of children more cleanly dressed than those at Akaba. It must be rather slow work here.

When we came down we were accosted by the Haz Bashi, who would seem to have been *wakened* up by our appearance, and he accompanied us to our tents, where we found everything ready for our departure, and after going with us a short distance on foot, he took his leave, with many good wishes for our journey. This is a very interesting and important spot to me, as being the station which I identify with the "Succoth" of Exodus.[1]

We crossed the broad plain of the Wady el 'Arīsh[2] —in which are several water channels, though they have not a drop of water in them—and continued all day a most monotonous journey, in a north-westerly direction. On the way I heard our people speaking about Mount Bághir—"Mount Sinai, mūsh Bághir," as Abu Nabut said. This will be the cry now, and it will soon be taken up by all! About one o'clock we met a woman with

[1] Exodus xii. 37.

[2] Isaiah xxvii. 12. Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," pp. 285, 287.

two children on two camels. She was the wife of a soldier at Nakhl. I certainly was surprised at meeting her, with only one Arab driving the camels; a second one followed at some distance. The *Derb el Hadj* is a well-trodden path, and perfectly safe.

We arrived in Wady Nethilah at 5.50 P.M., where we are encamped for the night. It is much less cold here. On the journey I wore my dark spectacles, and I felt the benefit of them. Yesterday I was quite blinded by the sun, and actually could not see for some time after I had entered the tent. I have arranged with Abu Nabut to send my letters on from to-morrow's station, so that they may get to Suez in time for the mail of Sunday. I shall see and get my letter to "The Times" ready to send you. You will of course forward it at once. I shall not telegraph to you till I get to Suez, but I shall do so to Mr. Gibbs if I am able. This letter will be all I shall send to you now.

February 13.—We left this morning at 8.15, and arrived at our station in the Wady Hawawiet at 4.40 P.M. It rained a little in the morning, and my people wanted to stay; but I would not let them, as it is absolutely necessary my letters should go on to-night to Suez. I have prepared a tele-

gram on the road for Mr. Gibbs to make use of: therefore you will see the news in Reuter's telegrams no doubt. I only trust I shall find good news from you when I arrive. God Almighty bless you. Addio.

Ras el Gibab (*two days from Suez*), *February* 14.—I begin here the last letter I shall have to write to you on what is properly to be called my "journey," with the most gratifying intelligence that I have satisfactorily determined the position and identification of *Pi-ha-hiroth*—the entrance to the caverns. It is the *Wady Mahaserat*, which, in my last letter, I told you we went up from the west side of the head of the Gulf of Akaba. It was only this evening that Mr. Milne gave me the full particulars of his trip to the "Maghara," near Pharaoh's Island, on the 6th inst., the particulars of which are duly recorded in my route-book.

After I had done up my letter last night for Mr. Levick I gave it to the messenger, one of the Beduins of our party, who was to carry it to Suez; after which every one joined in giving him instructions as to where he was to go, and what he was to do when he got to the Canal, where he would be sure to be stopped, as the bridge is only opened for passengers once a day. He was to say that it was

from the Hakim Bashi, the Emir to whom the Khédive gave the steamer, and that it was for the Bostat-el-Inglese, for the Khawāja Lebbek, and of great importance, and then he would be sure to be allowed to pass at once. Then the man, though not afraid of thieves, had a wholesome dread of hyenas on the road, so he was supplied with a pistol, powder and shot. To these Abu Nabut added a cloak, and some one else a coat, to protect the poor man from the cold, and at nine o'clock he started on a swift camel or dromedary. He will reach the bridge early this morning.

We started at 8 A.M. The Sheikh wanted to wait, as it threatened rain, but I was inexorable; and after all it was fine. Near us yesterday were encamped a soldier, his wife and child, with three camels. This is a regular beaten road, as I explained when we were at Kala'at el Nakhl. Where we stopped to lunch we fell in with a party of Beduins going to Suez with wood and charcoal, some ten camel loads. For the charcoal they may get as much as one pound the camel load; for the wood, four shillings only. One could hardly imagine that this would pay them. We are now on our way *down* to Suez, having crossed the water-parting between the Mediterranean (Wady el 'Arīsh)

and the Gulf of Suez. Near the summit the road has been cleared of stones, and improved by Abbas Pasha. Here Milne found a vein of yellow ochre (an ore of iron), which he gave me for the Khédive. Neither this nor the other would *pay* to work, but I shall do right to give them to His Highness.

February 15.—The last morning I shall have to write to you before reaching Suez, which is now, thank God, within sight! Before we got to our place of encampment last night, we came upon a *considerable tract of green grass:* its colour was remarkable, and took us quite by surprise! I am convinced that formerly this country was *fertile*, and that it might be *made so again*. But when once we had crossed the water-parting, we came into a sandy region extending to the Gulf of Suez, where vegetation is difficult, and almost impossible. Our Beduins collected a lot of wood on the way to serve for their fires to-night, as they will find none further on. In the sand we found stunted plants, with immensely long roots to them: one measured as much as nine yards in a straight line! These are the things to keep the sand together.

Thinking over Milne's report about those caves at Mahaserat, I asked Abu Nabut the meaning of "Mahaserat," when the fellow began telling me a

long cock and a bull story about Moses and Pharaoh taken from the Korân, and *so* explaining the name. This shows you how soon legends arise. About noon to-day we came in sight of the sea, and I cried out, like the ten thousand Greeks, "*θαλασσα*" (the sea)! After that we kept coming down, down, so that on the whole we have descended some 900 feet. The difference of temperature was very soon felt, and it was warm in spite of a strong wind blowing. On the other side of the mountains the same wind would have frozen us to death. Milne has made a sketch of me to-day in my *takhtera-wân;* it will give you an idea of the conveyance, and others too, who may feel inclined to follow my example when they perform a pilgrimage to my Mount Sinai. I fear I could not have performed the journey without it.

Suez, February 15.—I have only time to inform you of my safe arrival here. For your dear letters, and all you have done for me, *as I knew you would*, you have my hearty thanks. The steamer from Bombay is behind-hand, so Milne will go on by her perhaps to-night. The 'Erin' has not returned! She is at Tor, so my letters by her will come on after me. I have completed a rough sketch of the letter for "The Times." I conclude

that journal will be the best to send it to, but I leave you absolute discretion to do what you like with it.

Now, perhaps, that these important matters have been thus brought by me to public notice in "The Times," it may be worth the while of others to follow up the great discoveries I have been permitted to make, and complete them more *in detail* than it has been in my power to do.

February 16.—So our poor friend Livingstone is dead! This is sad news indeed. I have made up my mind to start for Cairo to-morrow. I cannot wait to see Milne off; but Mr. Andrews, the chief clerk of the P. and O. Company, is very kind and will attend to him. He takes on the instruments for the Royal Geographical Society, and the geological specimens.[1] I see that you have inserted my "Notes on Egypt" in the "Athenæum," and that the editor, as usual, has cut out all that concerns me and my expedition. I have no time to answer your letters to-day, being fully occupied with all our friends here, and I have still some observations to make. I find that, after all, Mahaserat really means what Abu Nabut said, so that I have a very strong case. I shall have to *fight* lots of people

[1] Presented, by Dr. Beke's desire, to the British Museum.

when I get to England; but I shall have the majority on my side. I have done what I wished, and am truly thankful for it.

Midnight.—I am truly grieved to learn such bad news of your health. The trouble and anxiety I have unfortunately caused you have, I feel, been greatly instrumental in increasing your illness. I only hope, when I return home, we may be able to get you well again.

CHAPTER IX.

RETURN TO CAIRO—FAREWELL AUDIENCE OF THE KHÉDIVE—HOMEWARD BOUND.

CAIRO, *February* 17.—To go back to our last day's journey to Suez, which commenced at 7.30 in the morning. We proceeded eastward towards the bridge over the Suez Canal, which has caused the Hadj route to be diverted from its former course, to the one on which we travelled, being to the south of the old road. At 10.30 we came to the bridge, which is a miserable concern, quite unworthy of so great an undertaking. It is made of roughly hewn timbers laid across four iron boats, two on each side; between which a movable platform laid on three other boats is dragged by ropes, and then rafters run out to support a sort of portcullis, which is lowered down, and then planks laid to make a connected roadway — altogether a most barbarous affair. We were half an hour before we got across. Abu Nabut had sent most of our Arabs on in front to help to pull the boats into their places and so expedite matters.

After crossing we proceeded over the fresh water canal and along its side, between it and the salt marshes at the head of the Gulf, which they are *attempting* to render fertile; but it will be a long time indeed before they succeed in this. We then crossed the marsh itself, and so soon as we got on solid ground we stopped to lunch, and then continued our journey, reaching Suez at 2 P.M.

As we entered the town we were told by some Beduins that our messenger arrived safely on Sunday morning; but this we found not to be exactly the fact, it having been Sunday afternoon. Nevertheless, it would appear that Mr. Levick did not forward my telegram to Mr. Tuck till Monday morning, out of consideration, perhaps, for poor Tuck, who has been at death's door since I left. Instead of going to the hotel, I decided on encamping on an open space at the back of the town called "the camp." During the afternoon lots of *hadjis* from Mecca arrived, and pitched their tents around us.

I have already told you that I left Suez at 8 o'clock this morning, after having thanked all my good friends for their kind assistance, and wished them "good bye." Abu Nabut came on with me by train to act as courier. You suggest that I

should give a lecture here. If I were a ready speaker I would; but I should have to write it out, and I have not the time for this. On my arrival here I met Mr. Rogers, who was kindly coming down to the station in his carriage to meet me. Mr. Gibbs also came up and welcomed me most cordially. This resulted in my going in to dine at the Consulate and to tell them all the news.[1]

February 18.—My first visit this morning was, of course, to Nubar Pasha. He was delighted to see me, I might almost say in raptures, so glad was he to be relieved from the anxiety and responsibility he had incurred on my account, believing, not unnaturally from the non-appearance of the 'Erin,' that some accident had happened to me. "Never again," said he, "would he do a good natured thing for any foreigner!" Had I been lost, he would have been deemed my "*assassin*," and so on. I had to appease him as well as I could, and to tell him that I knew his "bonté" would not allow him to keep his pledge. He tells me he only heard of the safety of the 'Erin' two days ago. It appears that the Captain ran short of coal, and this, to-

[1] Mr. Rogers has confirmed the meaning of "Mahaserat," as being the "hemming in," the "driving up into a corner;" so that Abu Nabut's story is correct.

gether with very foul weather, had delayed them so much that they with difficulty reached Tor at all.

During the last week there have been marriages in the Khédive's family, and *fantasia ketir*—festivities without end, so that public business has been a little, or rather, a great deal neglected. His Excellency asked me no end of questions about my journey. My description of the fertility of Madiān (Midian) and Akaba interested him very much indeed; also my opinion of the possibility of fertilizing the Tih, which I contend is not very much worse than Kent—"the garden of England"—as regards soil, the great drawback being, of course, the comparative want of water. But water is *there*, if they only knew how to utilize it, and if once they planted trees, the rain would increase, as it has already done in other parts of Egypt.[1] The latter part of our conversation, which lasted upwards of an hour, turned upon "miracles," respecting which his belief is much the same as mine, namely, that "all things are miracles." I spoke of my *compagnon de voyage* as a perfect man of science, who would not believe in things contrary to what is called the laws of nature, and who was, therefore, dissatisfied at our not having found a

[1] See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 61, and "Egypt as it is," pp. 352-354.

volcano—to which he replied, "Il est un savant mécréant, tandis que vous, M. Beke, vous êtes un savant croyant," to which I answered, "Plutôt croyant que savant." This brought me a hearty squeeze of the hand, and so we parted.

All the people here seem full of my discoveries; and Abu Nabut, who is now the prince of dragomans, is in great request, my discoveries losing nothing by the manner in which he relates them. The welcome and congratulations I receive on all sides are most cordial and gratifying. I hear that the British Consulate here is abolished, and my friend Rogers has been offered the Consulate at Buenos Ayres, where his profound knowledge of Eastern affairs would be lost, and he would have to begin another line of study, so he has refused.[1] But this is a matter with which the Foreign Office does not concern itself; its practice being always to put the square peg into the round hole, and *vice versa*.

I have now been to call on General Stanton, who received me in a very friendly manner, asking me a good deal about my journey; but I did not altogether like his *manner*. He twitted me with not having brought back some of the sacrificial

[1] Mr. E. J. Rogers was soon after appointed Director of Public Instruction in Cairo by the Khédive of Egypt.

bones. The afternoon was taken up in receiving visits from many of my very good friends here; but, hearing Colonel Gordon (Chinese Gordon) was in Cairo, I managed to go and call on him. He is so like our friend Major Wilson, that for the moment I thought it was the Major; and he himself admitted the likeness. Colonel Gordon is a man of middle height, sparely but strongly built, and giving little indication of the strength, both of sinews and constitution, which has borne him so far unscathed through so many hardships. In complexion he is still comparatively fair and fresh. He is quite youthful in appearance, with regular features, brown hair, and bright keen eyes. We had half an hour's friendly conversation, during which we spoke of Sir Samuel Baker's expedition having cost a total of £475,000; but he said he thought the real cost was not more than half that sum. However, even this is a good big sum for having done what Gordon has now to *undo!* He expressed a wish to know my views about the Upper Nile, the lakes, &c., and proposed that we should adjourn till to-morrow morning, when we could meet at his room, where he has a large map. Gordon knows all about us from our friend Dr. Stevenson of Patrixbourne, and says he has seen our old house at "Bekesbourne."

I am told there was a large American party here a few days ago, a Dr. Bartlett and company, who were very sorry they had missed me. Apropos of Dean Stanley's "three low peaks," I have just seen Abdullah Joseph, who was the Dean's dragoman eighteen years ago, and went with him to Petra, passing *Jebel-e'-Nūr*, and he tells me that it is a common Arab tradition that this is the true Sinai; and yet he never told Dean Stanley, nor, according to his account, has he mentioned it to any other traveller. I cannot make this out. The man says, and not without some show of reason, that the Arab tradition is more to be trusted to than the Christian one; because they have had it from father to son.

February 19.—I am even more tired to-day than I was yesterday, though I have done nothing to make me so. The fatigue of my journey, which I withstood so manfully, is now telling on me. Mr. Milne, I hear, left Alexandria yesterday morning for Southampton. He will probably be in England as soon as this letter. This morning I resumed my conversation with Colonel Gordon, and have been talking "Upper Nile" with him. He leaves for Suez to-morrow morning, and thence proceeds by sea to Suakin, and on by land to Khartum, his object being to reach Gondokoro as

quickly as possible, and to proceed up the river Nile to where it *is said* to be navigable as far as the Albert Nyanza.

In the evening, just as I was going to bed, Colonel Gordon called again on me. He said he could not leave without saying good-bye to me. We had some very interesting conversation about his expedition. I recommended him not to be in a hurry, my experience of African character having taught me that such work as his, to be sure, must be slow. He replied that he was prepared to devote himself to his task, and to leave his bones in Africa, if it were so to be. Taking up your little Bible from the table, he said *that* was his companion and guide. He promised to write to me, and we parted good friends I trust.

[Colonel Gordon is now Gordon Pasha, and from the reports that have since reached us from time to time it has been seen that he has fully redeemed his vow; for not only has he ably and thoroughly accomplished the task he then set himself, but has even made his expedition, so far from being an expense to the Khédive, actually pay its own expenses, and a source of revenue to Egypt. His work in Eastern Intertropical Africa, thus far, has been preparatory to that on which he is now so

earnestly engaged, namely, the total abolition of the slave trade. With such absolute authority as the Khédive has recently intrusted to him—by appointing him Governor-General of the Soudan for life, and having raised him to the rank of a Pasha—there can be very little doubt that he will do much to assist this glorious object. If not entirely successful in this work, which is one hardly within the power of any single human being to accomplish in a lifetime, he will at all events have done a great work in developing commerce and civilisation within the regions of Eastern Inter-tropical Africa.

Gordon Pasha's journals are said to be in course of preparation for publication, and will doubtless be looked forward to with deep interest by all who feel any concern in African matters.]

February 20.—I am back just in time to meet the Nile travellers, who are returning from Upper Egypt, and will now be proceeding to Palestine *via* my Mount Sinai and Petra. In the course of conversation with Cook's manager, Mr. Howard and Abu Nabut, I learned that not only is thunder *said* to be heard by the pilgrims on their way back from Mecca, but that some of them declare that they have seen angels ascending and descending Jebel-

e'-Nūr; and that there is a tradition that when Moses was crossing Wady el-Tih, he saw the pillar of fire on the summit of this mountain, which is the reason for its name. You will recollect that when at Akaba I asked the origin of the name, but could not get any satisfactory explanation. Such is almost invariably the case. You must leave these people to tell their story their own way. If you put leading questions or ask for explanations, you are almost certain to be misled. The *truth* of all these traditions is not at all the question. It is the *fact* of their existence that concerns me. If I were to speculate on the subject, it might be objected that all this was pure imagination; whereas I have now simply to relate *facts*, and leave others to draw their own conclusions.

I am also happy to be able to meet one of General Stanton's objections or cavils respecting the sacrifices. The Arabs continue to perform sacrifices at the present day; it would therefore have been preposterous for me to have brought away with me the *horns* of an animal that might, for aught I know, have been killed and eaten a few months ago! But I learned that there is no stated period for making these sacrifices on Jebel-e'-Nūr, as there *is* on Mount Arafat by Mecca. Those performed

on Jebel-e'-Nūr are *ex voto*, or by way of thanksgiving after recovery from illness, or in consequence of any good fortune.[1] This explains the visit of

[1] "The last number of the *Comptes Rendus* of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres in Paris contained an interesting attempt made by M. Joseph Halévy to decipher in their entirety the *graffiti* to be found on rocks in the desert of Safa, situated south-east of Damascus. Mr. Cyril Graham had signalised them for the first time in 1857, and twenty-one of them were published in an imperfect state in the *Transactions* of the German Oriental Society. Ten years later Dr. Wetzstein, at that time Prussian Consul in Damascus, made copies of 260 of them, twelve of which are to be found in his Diary in the Hauran, Berlin, 1860. In the following year, and in 1862, Count de Vogüé, French Ambassador at Vienna, and M. Waddington, late Minister of Public Instruction in Paris, both members of the French Institute, took copies of some hundreds of these inscriptions, 402 of which have lately been published by the former in the second series of his work, 'La Syrie Centrale.' The letters having some resemblance to those of the Himyaritic inscriptions, two German Orientalists tried to attribute the *graffiti* to the tribes of Saba, who, as it is supposed, came to Safa from Yemen towards the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, and accordingly they based the decipherment of them on the language of the Himyaritic inscriptions. Their attempt, however, did not lead to any satisfactory results. M. Halévy thinks that those *graffiti* were traced by the Arabic tribe *Thamood* who served as mercenaries in the Roman army. They contain, according to him, mostly proper names with devotional formulæ, similar to those of the Sinaitic inscriptions. We shall quote the translation of a few of them: 'By An'am Ahlam, son of the son of Am, son of 'Abdeel, son of Wahib, son of 'Abdeel.' 'By Ofah, son of Carib, in memory of his mother.' Some of them finish with the words, 'In memory of all the relations (?), friends (?). May there be peace with the others.' Others have the words: 'He has accomplished his vow;' and 'He has done (that), may he be pardoned.' As to the language of these *graffiti*, M. Halévy believes it to be intermediate between the Arabic and the Northern Semitic dialects. We find here the conjunction כ as in Arabic and the Sabean idiom, as well as a great number of proper names which are in use in those languages. On the other hand, the article ה, the preposition על,

Sidi Ali ibn 'Elim, who, I am told, was a Moslem commander in the first ages of Islam, like Abu Obeida—whose tomb you and I saw in the valley of the Jordan, and which you photographed.[1] I dare say the Cufic inscription we found at the foot of the mountain may tell us something about this. I must try and get a *squeeze* taken of it.

Colonel Gordon has not yet gone. He has seen my article in the *Athenæum*,[2] and does not think

and the ו as suffix of the third person masculine, occur in these inscriptions as in Hebrew. There are, however, words which are peculiar to the language of the *graffiti*, *e.g.* פעם, which occurs often, and which M. Halévy translates with 'to consecrate something in memory of somebody.' No name of any God is mentioned directly (we find only in the formation of proper names עבדאל, 'servant of El,' and לעאמן 'confiding in Loo'), and no cross or any other religious symbol, as is the case in the Christian inscriptions of Syria, is to be found. M. Halévy concludes from this fact that the inscriptions must have been written at a time when heathenism was already given up by the tribes that inscribed them without their having been as yet converted to Christianity. That would be towards the end of the third century A.D. 'At that time,' he says, 'Christianity became the official religion of the Empire; doubt and scepticism penetrated amongst those Arabic tribes which were the allies of Rome, and amongst whom for a certain time a kind of vague Deism was prevalent, until the day when they disappeared, having been absorbed by the great migrations which had taken place in those countries.' This last supposition will have to be proved by some more valid arguments, which the author will probably produce in his promised extended essay on the Safa *graffiti*. M. J. Derenbourg, member of the Institute, gave in a previous communication to the *Comptes Rendus* the decipherment of some letters of these *graffiti*, the chief point of which was the recognition of the word בן 'son,' read בר by German scholars."—*Athenæum*, 16*th March* 1878.

[1] Mrs. Beke's, "Jacob's Flight," p. 285.

[2] *Athenæum*, 24th January 1874.

there is anything in it the Viceroy would be offended with, as his *policy* with respect to the annexation of all this part of Africa is well known and understood. In fact, Lieutenant Baker openly declared it in his paper read before the Royal Geographical Society, a notice of which appeared in the *Times*.

Last night I saw the carriage of some big-wig or other pass by the hotel, preceded by four *Kawásses*, the two middle ones carrying their sticks, as usual, and the other two, torches. It was a pretty sight, and caused the natives as it passed to exclaim, "Mashallah!" I met Captain Kirk, a nephew of Mr. Merceron's, in the Esbekiah Gardens to-day, who is staying at my hotel. He tells me he saw my nieces a few days ago at his aunt's, &c. We talked conversation talk. He is going to Bagdad and Persia, though what for I know not. I have been showing Mr. Frank Dillon my companion's sketches, which he looks on as very creditable and effective. Fedrigo Pasha and I have exchanged visits, but as yet without meeting.

I mean to write to my friend Professor Fleischer of Leipzig telling him of my discovery, and the traditions connected with it, and asking him what he knows about the subject. I fancy that Cufic inscription would have told me something; not

going back to the time of Moses, but perhaps recording the visit of Ali Ibn 'Elim, some thousand years ago. I spoke to Rogers about *Gharrel-e'-Nakhil* [at Succoth], and he says that it means "the Torrent of the Palm Grove." This shows that not only a palm tree (Nakhal), but a palm grove (*Nakhil*) must have existed in former times, where now no palm trees are found, and that therefore the vegetation was greater *then* than it is now. The Khédive is not at Abdin just now, so that I do not know when I shall be able to see His Highness.

February 22.—When I was thanking Mr. Gibbs for sending on my news from Mr. Tuck, he showed me the list of the new Ministry. Sir Stafford Northcote is Chancellor of the Exchequer, I see; but I doubt whether he will do anything for me. My "friends" seem inclined to do nothing for me, much as I have done for them in times past.

I met Nubar Pasha to-day, and congratulated him upon the safety of the 'Erin.' Availing myself of this opportunity I begged him not to delay speaking to the Khédive about me, and my desire to pay my respects to His Highness, as I said I was anxious to leave by the next mail for England. His Excellency replied that he had not yet had an opportunity, but would do as I wished. I have

heard something more about that *second* mountain (Eratówa), seen by Milne from the summit of Jebel Bághir, which you will recollect Abu Nabut spoke of as Horeb, with Rephidim. I suspect that Cufic inscription must be fully a thousand years old, if not more.

To-day I spent an hour in the Esbekiah Gardens. You would be surprised to see how prettily they are laid out with water, grottos, waterfalls and parterres, and in the centre a kiosque, where a military band plays three times a week, as is the custom at Nice, so that it is quite a pleasant lounge. I took a chair and sat down, for which I paid one piastre (two and a half pence), and listened to the music. They played "La Donna e Mobile" very well; but after that, we had some Turkish music, which was barbarous enough. There were crowds of people, and among them a good sprinkling of native women! It is the last day of the Greek Carnival, so there were some masks, but very trumpery affairs.

February 23.—I am going to make a rush to see the Khédive, who is at Abdin, I hear. 11 P.M.—I have been to Abdin and seen Murad Pasha, the Master of the Ceremonies, to whom I expressed my wish for an audience of His Highness. He asked

me to wait a few minutes, when he returned and said that His Highness was engaged just then, but would see me on Wednesday morning at nine o'clock. So until then I must be content to wait.

February 25.—On my presenting myself at the palace this morning, I found Mr. Frank Dillon and a number of other persons awaiting audiences; but His Highness could not receive them, and although I was requested to wait, the audience was ultimately postponed till to-morrow, on account of the Khédive being so very occupied with the Foreign Consuls. I hear there is a disturbance at the palace to-day about the modification of the "capitulations."[1] The other Powers generally have agreed to the proposed changes, but France holds out [but finally in 1875, under the pressure of a threat of the Egyptian Government to close the old mixed Tidjaret Courts, and so leave French citizens without means of redress against natives or foreigners, the measure was agreed to]; and Nubar Pasha, who is very fiery, used some very strong expressions with respect to France. Altogether it is not a very auspicious time for seeking a farewell audience of the Khédive.

I have come to the conclusion that باغر *Bâghir*

[1] McCoan's "Egypt as it is," p. 290.

is the proper spelling of the name, though what the meaning is I cannot make out. Hashim wanted to make it باقر *Bakir*, pronounced here *Bagir;* but he is certainly wrong. I should never have written it with an "*r*," Barghir, in the first instance, had there not been a غ *ghain*, as in G*h*abag*h*ib, when, if I mistake not, we put an "*r*" before the second *gh*, which is wrong. But the *gh* sounds exactly as if there were an "*r*" in it. I am told that Mount Sinai is called in the Korân "*Tor* Sinai," and that Mount Tabor is called to this day "*Tor* Tabor." *Tor*, therefore, must mean "mountain." I note this simply as a memorandum. "Eratówa," the name of the second mountain near Mount Bághir, on the other side of Wady Ithem, is said to derive its name from *retuba* (?), which means "cold or cool." In Robinson's account of his visit to Akaba, he makes out the Gulf to have extended very much further to the north in former times. Rüppell went the Hadj road in 1822. I must see what he says.

February 26.—I went to Abdin again this morning. On my entrance I was received by one of the officers (probably Zecchy Pasha), seemingly one of equal rank with Tonnino Bey. Whilst I was waiting we talked about slavery and the slave

trade, Sir Samuel Baker, &c. Tonnino Bey presently came in and conversed with us, coffee being served in the usual way. At half-past ten o'clock I was invited to go with Tonnino, who took me to the foot of the stairs, and saluting me, left me in charge of the "gentleman in waiting," who received me at the head of the stairs, and marshalled me into the audience chamber—or rather into the ante-chamber, in which were numerous officers standing about; and in which the Khédive welcomed me, coming towards me from the opposite side of the room. I made a profound bow and advanced to take His Highness's hand, which he held out to me, as he expressed his satisfaction at seeing me back, congratulating me on the success of my expedition, and mentioning the *inquietude* he had had on my account. He desired me to enter, and I followed him into what I take to be the audience chamber, requesting me to be seated—pointing to a chair—whilst he took a place upon the sofa. At this moment Nubar Pasha came in, and seated himself *en face.* I proceeded to explain to His Highness all that I had done; Nubar interfering much more on this occasion than on the former in the conversation, translating into Turkish what I said. The Viceroy remarked, "Then it is not a volcano."

I said, "No; in *this* respect I found myself mistaken, and that the appearance to Moses must therefore be regarded as miraculous." He appeared much interested, and when I spoke of the Cufic inscription, he said it ought to be communicated to Brugsch.

I then showed His Highness the specimen of iron ore, with respect to which he said, "It was unfortunate there was no coal near there." His Highness had evidently been primed by his Minister. I next showed and explained my companion's several drawings, Nubar making a running comment on all that I said. When I had finished, His Highness volunteered the remark, "You propose to publish them in an album." I replied, that such was my desire, and that if I might presume to request His Highness to do me the honour to allow me to dedicate the work to him—"With pleasure," responded he, bowing; whereupon His Excellency interfered, by saying, "Nous parlerons de çela après." This shut me up. So I thanked His Highness for his great kindness, and the assistance he had rendered the expedition, and took my leave. He shook hands with me in the most cordial and friendly manner, expressing the hope that he might have the pleasure of seeing me again. He came one step towards the door, and bowed as I turned round

to make my reverence. This visit was one of more ceremony than the last. To-day, too, is a council day, and all the Ministers are in attendance. I am told it is not usual to give audience on that day. When I came down-stairs Tonnino Bey asked me particularly at what hotel I was staying, with what object I do not know, unless to send me a 'ticket for soup.' So altogether my farewell visit to the Khédive has not been very satisfactory. I had no opportunity even to dilate upon my plans for flooding the Lybian Desert.

February 27.—Mr. Young, Livingstone's friend, has arrived, so I went at once to call upon him. His two daughters are with him. He received me very kindly, and we spent a couple of hours together in most interesting conversation, I showing them my sketches, &c. I gave the young ladies some of the shells we brought from Madiān (Midian.) We were talking about Livingstone and his first book, about which he consulted me when he was with us in Mauritius, and for which he got £10,000 from Murray. They agreed first for £2000, for 12,000 copies, and half profits for all over that number; then Murray agreed to give him half profits on the whole; and in the end he gave him two-thirds, the account showing

a profit of £15,000! Murray's whole dealing in the matter was most liberal.

Nubar Pasha is annoyed at my having gone to the Khédive direct, and is determined that the Khédive's consent to my dedicating my book to His Highness shall not hold good. Pazienza! All my friends here agree with me that, as I had already the *entrée*, there was no necessity for troubling Nubar Pasha on so trivial a matter, and that I was justified in taking the course I did.

March 1.—Mr. Thomas Cook has just arrived here for the purpose of starting for Suez, the pseudo-Sinai, Petra and the Holy Land, the great detachment from the American "Oriental Topographical Corps," under Professor Strong. Their camels, forty-three in number, went off yesterday to Suez. They take a photographer with them, and all sorts of apparatus. They are going to "do" the Holy Land entirely. It is most important I should see them. If I can I shall try to get them to go over my ground and *work it well*. I still feel very tired and unwell, quite different to what I did whilst on the journey. I suppose it is the reaction after the great strain of the past months. Mr. Young has now come to disbelieve the report of Livingstone's death,

as do his father-in-law, Dr. Moffatt, and Dr. Kirk. I wonder if it will turn out to be another false alarm.

So that fellow Orton has been found guilty, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. It would have been a misfortune and disgrace to the country had he by any means got off. Sir Alexander Cockburn will now, of course, retire and be made a peer. I wish I could retire, like him, on a good pension. Amongst the new arrivals is a brother[1] of Sir Stafford Northcote, a clergyman, with his wife and adopted daughter. Lord and Lady Clarence Paget are also here.

March 2.—My letter to you *via* Marseilles, I made a mistake and posted in the wrong box. I ought to have sent it to the French post-office, which is still continued *here*, though the English one is abolished. I went to the post-office and inquired if I could not rectify my mistake by paying something extra. I was told by the Director, to my surprise, that the administration taking into consideration the want of knowledge of the local postal arrangements on the part of "gli stranieri poverelli"—poor foreigners—took upon itself to put all such little mistakes straight, without mak-

[1] Since deceased.

ing any charge for it! What think you of that for Egyptian politeness![1]

I called on Professor Brugsch this morning, who took me rather aback by informing me that he had found out all about the route of the Israelites, and their passage of the *Yam-Suph*, which *he* makes to be neither the Gulf of Suez nor the Gulf of Akaba, but the *Lacus Sirbonis* lying on the extreme north-east of Egypt, close to the Mediterranean Sea, somewhere about 33° east long. What think you of that for a change? He speaks quite dogmatically. It is no "opinion" of his; he says he has no opinions. He deals simply with "facts." *The inscriptions on the ancient monuments say so.* All I say is, so much the worse for the interpretation of the inscriptions. From those inscriptions he says he can trace the route of the Israelites step by step as far as the *Yam-Suph* (translated "Red

[1] By the terms of a new Postal Convention with Egypt, which will come into operation on the 1st of April next, the British post-offices at Alexandria and Suez will be abolished on that date, and the exchange of money orders, as well as all other postal transactions between Egypt and the United Kingdom, will be carried on entirely through the medium of the Egyptian post-office. No money orders payable at the British post-office either in Alexandria or Suez will be issued in this country after the 23rd inst. Thenceforward all orders intended to be paid at those places will be drawn on the Egyptian post-office, and the regulations will be in all respects conformable to those adopted in the case of orders drawn on towns in the interior of Egypt.—*March 21st*, 1878.

Sea"), and thence to "Marah," which he makes (if I understand him rightly) to be the *Bitter* Lake: further he cannot trace them. Where Mount Sinai is the inscriptions do not say, though he finds mention of a *country* named "Sina," the position of which is not indicated. Now my opinion is that this interpretation of Egyptian inscriptions is on a *par* with the late Charles Forster's interpretation of the so-called "Sinaitic inscriptions," which he most elaborately and learnedly demonstrated step by step, word for word, letter for letter—every single word and letter of which was imaginary! Brugsch is a very clever man, but I am afraid he is working out Champollion's system *à l'outrance*. Mind, I am not alone in entertaining this opinion. What he told me certainly surprised me not a little at first.

He is going to call on me to-morrow or next day, and bring me a list of some books he wished me to read in order to know how the "Sinai" question stands. There are a few recent ones which I know I ought to see; but when he told me that Lepsius is the *first* authority on the subject, and that his opinion is that Serbal is the true Mount Sinai instead of the traditional one, he merely told me what I knew more than twenty years ago! He

says he has not himself published anything material on the subject.[1] Jebel-e'-Nūr he has heard of from Arabs, but knew nothing of its position, nor, in fact, anything of it except as the name of a mountain.

Just before luncheon was over I caught sight of Professor Owen, who came into the dining-room of the hotel for a second; so, taking off Mrs. Norris's *souvenir*, which I always wear at meals, I immediately jumped up, and followed him into the verandah, where he welcomed me, and I told him all about Mount Sinai, mentioning among other things the "angel's visits," when he said that the last *angelic* visit was that of an Englishman—the old pun of Pope Gregory—*Non angli sed angeli.* After leaving him, I told Mr. Young that Owen was there, as he wanted to see him. I then went back to take my cup of coffee, and returned again to the verandah, where Mr. Young and Mr. Northcote were talking together.

Seeing Professor Owen sitting in a carriage in front of the hotel speaking to a gentleman, I drew attention to the resemblance of Owen's profile to that of "Punch," to which both Northcote and Young assented. I added, that he had also the

[1] See the "Athenæum," 16th May 1864. See also the report in the "Times" of 15th and 18th September 1874 of the meeting of the International Congress of Orientalists.

same sarcastic look, and Northcote said that he could speak sarcastically too, whereupon I instanced what he had just said to me, though that was more complimentary than sarcastic, but perhaps with a spice of irony; and so the conversation became general. Mr. Young laughingly asked me across Mr. Northcote, why it was the angels in Jacob's vision went up and down a ladder? and on our both giving it up, he said, the reply of a Scotch boy was "he supposed it was because they were moulting"—had lost their wing feathers and therefore could not fly.

I must not omit to tell you a very good story which General Stanton told me about the Egyptologists. The Duke of Sutherland took a mummy to England with him, which he had unrolled by a learned Doctor, of the British Museum, and others interested in the subject. They had first had the inscriptions on the outside of the case given them to interpret, and they came to the assembly with the translation, describing in detail that the person whose body was enclosed was a certain priest named *A. B.*, the son of *C. D.*, &c. The mummy was then unrolled, and lo! and behold, the body was found to be that of a *woman!* But one cannot contradict these Egyptologists, because they profess to have the *key*, and if you say that what they declare the meaning to be is not true, they ask you what then

it does mean ? and if you are not prepared to say, that does not make them right. To-morrow I hope the American party will arrive, and then I should like to get away as quickly as possible. I hope money will arrive from you soon, as I want to settle with Abu Nabut, and be off home.

March 3.—I forgot to mention that when Professor Owen was talking with me yesterday, he said he supposed they would now give me a Canonry, such being the way persons of my sort were rewarded—alluding to Canon Tristram. I said that I was not in orders; but he replied that the Archbishop of Canterbury could easily remedy that. This is of course mere talk; but you will recollect Bishop Ryan and others have often expressed something of the same opinion. Archdeacon Hale, you know, strongly urged me when a young man to take holy orders: it is almost a pity I did not. However, I think that Mr. Disraeli [now Lord Beaconsfield] and Sir Stafford Northcote ought at least to increase my pension to £500 per annum.

Mr. Thomas Cook has been to see my pictures, and we have had an interesting talk about them, and other matters connected with the Holy Land, and travellers. He promises to let his American tourists know about me, directly they arrive. As I was going down-stairs, I met Professor Owen again. He said he was coming to tell me that Lord Clarence

Paget was much interested in my journey, and desired to have the pleasure of making my acquaintance, if I would go with him. I found his Lordship a very pleasing, not young, man, and with him I had an hour's conversation, going into the whole subject thoroughly. Lady Clarence is an invalid, he said, but hopes to be well enough to make my acquaintance in a day or two. His Lordship remarked, as I was leaving, that he took for granted I was travelling for the British Museum, and was quite surprised and shocked to learn that I was entirely on my own account, supported only by a few private friends, and was, in fact, now waiting for money to arrive to take me home.

March 4.—My friend Colonel Morrieson has just arrived, having come down the Nile by the same steamer as the American party. There being no rooms to be had in this hotel, and the Colonel and I having been "chums" at Suez, it was arranged for a bed to be made up in my room for him for the night. The American party were taken by Cook to the Hotel d'Orient. Colonel Morrieson was delighted to hear of my success; and when I said that I was waiting for funds from you, my journey and the delay in Egypt having cost more than I calculated, this kind good man, in the most unostentatious manner, made me a present of twenty pounds towards the expenses of my expe-

dition. I thanked him sincerely, as you may suppose. After breakfast a young man, a Mr. Percy Bankart, whom I have seen during the last few days with the Miss Youngs, came to ask my advice about joining the American party. At first I was inclined to advise him not to join them; but upon his explaining the special opportunity it offered, and the low terms upon which he would be taken, I said, "Go, by all means." He then promised to endeavour to take a "squeeze" for me of those Cufic inscriptions. [On his return to England Mr. Bankart wrote to Dr. Beke to say he had not been successful in obtaining the "squeeze," on account of the edges not being sufficiently sharp.]

I hear a very poor account of the American party from one who travelled with them up and down the Nile. He says he does not like them at all; that they are ignorant, bigoted, narrow-minded people; that there is not a single man of scientific acquirements or general knowledge—they are, in fact, mere "parsons,"—a conceited, self-sufficient set. After hearing this I decided not to go to Dr. Strong. If he wants me he will come to me; I shall not trouble myself about him.

In the "Pall Mall Budget" of February 20, I see there is an article on my discovery of Mount Sinai. I should not be surprised at finding my "Sinai" is Wellstead's mountain, only *he* did not identify it

with Sinai. The sand avalanche would well account for the thunder which Sheikh Mohammed assured me he, and others, had heard; only I do not quite see how there could be such "avalanches" on my mountain.[1]

There are two young Englishmen here named Creyke and Naylor, who are going to Petra; they have engaged the dragoman Yonis, and having plenty of money, are going to "do" the tour, so as to be back in London for "the season." It is a miserable day, cold and overcast in the morning; in the afternoon showery, and now set in for *rain*. Such is Cairo, where it never rains!

With respect to the American party, poor Cook and Howard have had an awful time with them on the subject of Mohammed ibn Iját and his bakhshish and camels. My impression is, that Dr. Strong in his self-sufficiency will decide on going along the Wady Arabah, and not up Wady el Ithem! He intends to follow in the *very footsteps* of the Israelites—as if a single inch of the ground were known

[1] "It will be interesting to hear whether Dr. Beke's Sinai is the same mountain as that visited by Wellstead, and described in his 'Travels in Arabia' (1838). Wellstead's Sinai was not a mountain to be visited by travellers who look for silence in solitude. It was a very noisy mountain, for Wellstead, having seated himself on a rock, saw an avalanche of sand falling, the sound of which 'attained the loudness of thunder,' caused the seat to vibrate, and so alarmed his camels that they were with difficulty prevented by their drivers from bolting. A more frightful occupation can hardly be imagined than that of riding a runaway camel on Mount Sinai."—*Pall Mall Budget*, February 20, 1874, p. 16, col. 2.

for a certainty. In the map which Mr. Bolton sent me, Kadesh Barnea is marked in *three* different places, fifty miles apart; and in Mr. Samuel Sharpe's map it is placed in a fourth position; and yet this Yankee Doctor intends going in the very footsteps! This is almost as amusing as Mark Twain's *Pilgrims* in his "New Pilgrim's Progress," who went to the Lake of Gennesareth, where they were in all the ecstasies of religious fervour. They *would* sail on the waters where the apostles had fished, where our Lord worked His miracles, and so on. A boat came near. How much would the people take? Two napoleons. An imposition: *one* napoleon was enough; they could not give a farthing more. The boat sailed away, and they never had a sail on the Lake. And all this enthusiasm was wasted for the sake of a paltry napoleon.

After luncheon I called on the Consul-General and Mrs. Stanton to take leave; they were very amiable, and after a long chat on Egyptian matters we parted. When I came home I received a visit from Lieutenant-Colonel Arendrup, on the staff of General Stone, a very amiable young Dane who came to Egypt for his health, and being poor (as he himself confessed), had accepted service under the Egyptian Government. He was most interested in my journey, and took the liberty of asking me to tell him about it. He was quite modest and un-

assuming, so fearful of giving offence, and so thankful for even the brief information that I at first gave him, that I warmed to him, and showed him my pictures, and had a long agreeable chat. [It is sad to have to relate that this promising young officer fell a victim in the ill-fated Egyptian expedition into Abyssinia in 1875.]

I have borrowed from Mr Young, Murray's "Handbook" of the Holy Land; in it I find a notice of Aly ibn "Alecin," who, instead of being a Moslem commander, was a Dervish. So I was right in calling him a "saint." You will see his tomb and mosque at "El Haram" in Route 23 from Jerusalem to Nazareth by the sea-coast, the first station from Yăfa on the way to Cæsarea. Messrs. Creyke and Naylor, who sat beside me at dinner, told me that they were going to Akaba, and should visit Jebel-e'-Nūr.

March 6.—The mail is in, and I have your letters. I shall start for Alexandria and England to-morrow, as I am longing to be home. I must confess that I am disappointed in not having had a little more attention paid me here; but I am known to be now no longer a rich man, and no one cares much for poor men. I have settled with Abu Nabut, paying him for thirty-nine days £195, and giving him and Hashim very good certificates.

Alexandria, March 8, 1874.—At length, my

dearest Milly, I come to my last letter from Egypt. I left Cairo yesterday, travelling with Colonel Stokes, who is returning home. We go together to Brindisi, whence he proceeds to Rome. He is a very agreeable companion, and we had a pleasant journey. Before leaving Cairo I met Lord Clarence Paget in the reading-room, who took leave of me in a very friendly way, asking me to call on him in town. He seemed much delighted with my pamphlet, even though I had not found a "volcano"—all the better, perhaps, he said.

Professor Brugsch has been calling on his Lordship *at the hôtel* within the last few days, yet he has not called on me according to his promise. Colonel Morrieson, with a friend of his, and I went to the Museum to take a last look at the monuments again. I there saw young Brugsch, who is curator, and he showed me his brother's hieroglyphical grammar. He says his brother is writing a history, which will soon be out.

When I came back from Boulak I found General Stone had called upon me. He has come *too late.* I sent him in return my P.P.C. Hashim accompanied me to the station, where I found old Abu Nabut waiting to see me off. I gave the old fellow a napoleon bakhshish, for which he was all thanks. Since I arrived I have been calling upon all my good friends here to say good-bye, and

lunched with Captain Roberts, manager of the P. and O.

In the evening I was *interviewed* by the correspondents of some newspapers, and a couple of Americans.

March 9: *On board the "Sumatra."*—On coming on board I found McKillop Bey, who has been made a Pasha, within the last fortnight. He is a fine fellow, a jolly English sailor. I was very glad to see him, and he me; and I was pleased to have the opportunity of expressing to him, in person, my gratitude for all he had done for me with respect to the steamer, and we took a very friendly leave of each other. Yesterday some of the passengers on landing were thoroughly drenched. To-day the sea is nothing to speak of, or we should not be able to leave the port.[1]

[1] "The great improvement which calls for accomplishment [as instanced by Dr. Beke at page 149] is the removal of the reef that bars the entrance to the port of Alexandria. Its existence ought no longer to be tolerated. Shipping to the amount of 1,300,000 tons enters the port every year. The exports amount in value to thirteen millions sterling. The imports come to five millions. The harbour works, which are near completion, when finished will have cost two millions and a half, and the conveniences then offered will put Alexandria next to Marseilles, Trieste, and Genoa in the rank of Mediterranean ports. Yet no ship can enter the port after nightfall, and all vessels of considerable draught cannot enter at all either by day or night in stormy weather. Alexandria Bay is five miles across; but as you near the harbour you find shoal water almost everywhere, across which for more than a mile stretches the new breakwater. The real deep-water channel, the only passage for large ships, is not 100 feet across, and has the additional drawback of being very circuitous. Its depth is only 27 feet, so that in rough

Our vessel started at 1.30 P.M. I have a cabin entirely to myself, and in this, as in everything else, the officials of the P. and O. Company have shown me every kindness and consideration, of which I cannot speak too highly, or sufficiently thank them for. Colonel Stokes tells me that, when dining at General Stanton's, some words I let drop led them to suppose I was a *German* long-settled in England; but on the way to Alexandria together, something led me to speak of my family as being an *old* English one; so Colonel Stokes tells me that, on arrival at Alexandria, he wrote to Stanton informing him of their mistake. How funny things are! My name and my German scholarship have led many others into the same mistake. It is certain I never *voluntarily* caused the error; on the contrary, I am too proud of my birth to disavow it, or to mislead any one with respect to it.

weather vessels of deep draught dare not venture in for fear of touching the rock in the trough of the sea. Barely a month ago, during a forty-eight hours' gale, the Austrian Lloyd and English mail steamers, and several merchantmen, dare not venture out of harbour; while four large vessels, tossed about outside in the offing for thirty-six hours, and the English turret-ship "Rupert," actually put back to Port Said rather than venture in. A careful survey has been recently made by a skilful English engineer of the amount of rock it would be necessary to remove in order to widen and deepen the channel sufficiently to permit entry and exit at all times and in all weathers. The work required proves by no means insurmountable. It is said that a tithe of what has been spent on the harbour would make its entrance safe, and it seems penny wise and pound foolish not to take the matter in hand at once."—*See* "*The Times*," *Feb.* 1, 1878.

March 12.—In consequence of the rough weather we shall not reach Brindisi till the evening. However, you will get this letter on Monday morning; and if I can only manage to catch the Sunday morning train from Venice to Turin, I hope I shall sleep at Turin, and start for Paris on Monday morning, so that I may possibly be with you on Tuesday night.

March 13, *Brindisi.*—The mails and passengers landed last night after I was gone to bed. At about midnight I got your letter: the cuttings from "The Times" of Holland, Wilson, and Palmer's letters are very amusing. What a funk they are in! *They* have not a leg to stand on, whatever may be the fate of *my* Mount Sinai. What does Wilson mean by "Ras Sufsâfeh"? Is it the same as Holland's "Jebel Musa"? I feel sure that I have been successful, if only in demolishing the traditional Mount Sinai, and setting people to look at things in a proper light. I forward this letter by one of the passengers who is going direct to Turin this afternoon, as otherwise it would not reach you till after my arrival. Now, God bless you! Have courage, and all will go well, I am confident! Thus ends the narrative of my expedition in search of the *true* "Mount Sinai."

"*Gloria Tibi Domine!*"

APPENDIX.

A.

(See pp. 305–400.)

GEOLOGICAL NOTES* ON THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, NORTH-WESTERN ARABIA, AND 'MOUNT SINAI' (MOUNT BÁGHIR). BY JOHN MILNE, F.G.S.

THE journey, of which the following is an account, was made in company with the late Dr. Beke in quest of the true Mount Sinai, which mountain he placed in North-Western Arabia, about 95 miles in a north-easterly direction from the district in which it has hitherto been conjecturally considered to exist.

Owing to the rapidity with which the country visited was traversed, it would be impossible to connect with accuracy the various observations which were made; and therefore, rather than attempt to construct a series of sections showing the relation of the various formations to each other, I have considered it better simply to indicate the conditions as observed at various points, leaving it for those more conversant with the geology of these districts to connect the following fragments with those already accumulated. For assistance in the determination of the rock-specimens collected, of which 77 are described (22 of which were examined microscopically), I have to thank Mr. Thomas Davies, F.G.S., of the British Museum.

District visited.—From Suez we went by sea to Ainúnah, which lies in the north-east corner of the Red Sea, and then on to Akaba, touching almost daily at some point or other along the coast. From Akaba we took camels, and journeyed some twenty miles in a north-easterly direction up Wady Ithem, in the direction of Petra and Ma'an. This was the furthest point of our journey. On again reaching Akaba, instead of returning to Suez

* The specimens referred to have been presented by the late Dr. Beke's desire to the British Museum.

by sea, as we had come, we reached it by crossing the elevated desert plateau of the Tih.

Ras Sheikh el Battan.—This place is about 50 miles south from Suez, on the coast of the [traditional] Sinaitic Peninsula. Here the hills, which are approached from the coast by about a mile of a gradually sloping sandy plain, are granitic. All the way from Suez the coast on either side is bounded by high and rugged hills, in general appearance very similar to these. Being destitute of vegetation, there has been no check to the effects of disintegration; and these mountains, which probably would have been more rounded in their outlines had they been protected by trees and herbage, now rise in bold and often almost perpendicular cliffs, contrasting strongly with the rounded granitic outlines seen in many parts of the British Isles, especially in Cornwall. Looking at these hills from a distance, they appeared as if built up of so many triangular slabs which had been laid over the surface of some pre-existing hill. The tops or apices of these slabs pointing upwards give rise to innumerable peaks, forming prominent serrations on the ridge and rough points upon the sides. The granite is of a greyish colour, and consists chiefly of quartz and a black mica, little felspar being present. These mountains are cut by numberless dykes, which are generally nearly vertical, but yet often intersect each other at small angles. Looking at these from the coast, they appear as so many well-defined broad red or dark-coloured bands. At this place, Ras Sheikh el Battan, the red bands were felsites, whilst those of a dark colour, which varied from a black to olive-green, were felspathic porphyries. The two might easily be distinguished by blows of the hammer—the former being hard and compact, and having a clear metallic ring when struck; whilst the latter, being much decomposed, sounded dull, and readily crumbled. In places some of these dykes were filled with small cavities containing a white glassy mineral, which in several cases, having dissolved out, gave to the rock a vesicular structure.

In width these dykes vary considerably; those examined varied from 6 to 12 feet.

Lying on the sand about a quarter of a mile from the foot of the mountains, there are some curious slabs of sandstone from three to six feet square, made up of readily separable laminæ of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in thickness. These slabs are hard, brittle, slightly calcareous, of a gritty siliceous structure and nearly white. They probably come from beds of the so-called Libyan Sandstone, of which there is an exposure somewhere near this place.

Dr. Beke tells me that, when travelling from Tor towards Suez along this coast, he passed over a surface of fine sandstone like

the one just described, on which there were numerous tracks of birds' feet apparently as fresh and perfect as if only just impressed.

Here the curious forms assumed by drifted sand could be well observed. When sailing along the coast, from high up between sloping walls of granite bounding the valleys, the sand can be seen descending like a glacier. Every gorge and valley is filled from side to side with it; and from high up, at a narrow terminus where the sides of granite approach each other, there is a sloping even surface which comes winding down until it merges in the plain below.

As at this point there was no valley, the glacier-like form did not exist, but in its place were long winding sandy ridges running from the foot of the hills and terminating abruptly in the plain some 50 or 100 yards from their origin. A section at right angles to the length of one of these, would give two sides sloping upwards at about 45°, meeting at an angle some 12 or 14 feet above the ground. Running up these two faces there are parallel lines very similar to regularly-formed ripple-marks, which give the surface a corrugated appearance. The curious point, however, is that the ripple-marks on one side of the mound alternate with those on the other; that is to say, where the crest of one ripple-mark running up the side of the mound reaches its ridge, there it meets with the hollow of a ripple-mark on the opposite side, in this way causing the ridge to be a regularly-formed waved line.

Similar structures to these mounds of sand I have seen in Iceland built up of ashes, but on a much larger scale. Those on the north-east side of Godalands Jokull, are ridges half a mile in length running from the top of the hills down to the valley below, and have a striking resemblance to some huge railway embankment.

Tor.—A short distance before reaching this place the high range of granitic hills which borders the coast gradually grows lower, and finally disappears in the sand. Many of the dykes in them are approximately parallel, and those which are not vertical dip towards the south. As this range of hills, which from the map appears to be called Jebel Gabêliyeh, dies out, another range rises in the rear, which as it proceeds southwards approaches the sea-board, from which at first it is some 15 or 16 miles distant. The highest of these, Jebel Serbal, 6734 feet, has, amongst others, a claim to be the true Mount Sinai. Between it and the sea where Tor is situated there is a broad and gently undulating plain. Tor itself, although a small village, has a striking feature in being built almost wholly of blocks of coral obtained from some large mounds about 100 yards to the north, which, when they

come down to the shore, form small cliffs from 20 to 30 feet in height. These mounds, which are made up of sand, imbedded masses of coral, and a variety of shells, are apparently a drift accumulation—an idea suggested by the imperfect condition of the shells and the irregular manner in which they appear to be thrown together.

Sherm.—At page 396 of Mr. Poulett Scrope's work on volcanoes it is stated, on the authority of Burckhardt, that there is a probability of the existence of volcanic rocks at Sherm. Burckhardt, when speaking of this district in his 'Syria' (page 522), says, "The transition-rock, which partakes of the nature of greenstone or grauwacke or hornstone and trap, presents an endless variety in every part of the peninsula; so that, even were I possessed of the requisite knowledge, to describe them accurately would try the patience of the reader. Masses of black trap much resembling basalt compose several isolated peaks and rocks;" and at page 529, he continues, "From Sherm we rode an hour and a quarter among low hills near the shore" [towards Akaba]. "Here for the first and only time I saw volcanic rocks. For a distance of about two miles the hills presented perpendicular cliffs, formed in half-circles, and some of them nearly in circles, none of them being more than from 60 to 80 feet in height; in other places there were appearances as of volcanic craters. The rock is black, with a slight reddish tinge, full of cavities, and has a rough surface; on the road lay a few stones which had separated themselves from above. The cliffs were covered by deep layers of sand; and the valleys at their foot were also overspread with it. It is possible that rocks of the same kind may be found towards Ras Abu Mohammed; and hence may have arisen the term black (μέλανα ὄρη), applied to the mountains by the Greeks. It should be observed that low sand hills intervene between the volcanic rocks and the sea, and that above these, towards the higher mountains, no traces of lava are found, which seems to show that the volcanic matter is confined to this spot."

Of these remains of an extinct volcano or volcanoes the only trace obtained was the picking-up of a few pieces of volcanic breccia, as will be seen from my notes on the neighbourhood, which unfortunately, from want of time, relate only to the harbour.

From this place to Ras Abu Mohammed, the most southern point of the Sinaitic Peninsula, there is an absence of the granitic rocks, which keep some 6 or 7 miles back from the coast-line, their place being supplied by low hills and cliffs of limestone and sandstone. On the east side of Sherm harbour, the cliffs, which are about 50 feet in height, are formed of sand, capped with two

horizontal beds of yellowish white limestone. These latter, which are about 14 feet thick, are full of irregular cavities, and are in fact rather a breccia of shells and coral than a compact limestone.

The beds of sand, which in places appear to dip at about 12° towards the south, although compact, are much too friable to be called a sandstone. They are of a yellowish red colour, and in places are formed of quartz grains as large as peas, giving the character of a *grit*. Intercalated with them is a band about six inches wide, of rounded and angular pieces of flint, quartz, and granite. Masses of limestone, having fallen from the beds above, form a protection against disintegrating forces, which rapidly tend to undermine them. Passing from these cliffs round the harbour in a northerly direction, across the entrance to a wady running to the north-east, steep banks of sand are met with, which continue to its south-west side. These are generally of a yellowish colour; but in one or two places they were of a fiery red. At several points there are indications which might be taken for horizontal bands of a black colour, forming a cap to these banks of sand; where these do not exist their remains are seen in taluses of black *débris*.

Want of time prevented a close examination of these; but judging from the numerous fragments of black stone lying on the beach, it would appear that they were in part, if not wholly, of volcanic origin. Generally speaking, they were compact, fine-grained, of a black colour, and even in their texture. Under the microscope, however, they were distinctly seen to be a volcanic felspathic breccia (probably doleritic particles cemented by a triclinic felspar)—a condition which, from external appearances, would never have been suspected, unless from a slight irregularity on the weathered surfaces of the specimens. With them were a few fragments of a coarse-grained black rock, consisting of quartz and felspar cemented by limonite, which is distinctly a breccia.

To the west, behind these banks of sand, low hills with rounded outlines run from north to south, which have a definite stratification and dip towards the north.

The cliffs of Ras Abu Mohammed, lying to the south-west, are about 90 feet in height, and are apparently composed of the same coral limestone as that forming a cap to the sand at Sherm, with which they also agree in the direction of their dip.

Inland from the cape there is a curious round hummock-shaped black hill.

From Sherm our course was close along the shore of the

Sinaitic Peninsula, along which nothing but rugged hills of granite and "dunes" of sand were visible.

At the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba we sailed due east to Ainúnah, the approach to which was for many miles guarded by innumerable coral reefs, on which the soundings were seldom over two fathoms. At Ainúnah, excepting a few palm trees and the remains of an aqueduct apparently of Roman origin, there is but little of interest. The hills, which are very high, several of them being upwards of 7000 feet, are a day's journey or more distant from the coast. About halfway towards them there is a long low white scarp, forming the flank of a range of hills or a low plateau, which is probably limestone. The remainder of the country is flat, and slightly undulating, being for the most part covered with stones and sand; notwithstanding which, relatively speaking, it is very fertile, many bushes, acacias, and small date-palms being visible.

Between this place and the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba there are many islands, all of which, judging from their similarity in appearance to those examined, are made up of a whitish limestone dipping at a low angle towards the east.

Madiān [*Midian*].*—The first place landed at inside the Gulf of Akaba was Madian, up to which point both sides of the gulf are bounded by bleak and bare high hills of granite. Here there is a Beduin village, situated on the sea-board at the termination of a valley or wady coming down from the east. This valley at its mouth forms a boundary line between two sets of lithologically different rocks. On the right or south side is a granite, whilst on the left or north side there are beds of sandstone and conglomerate.

The granite, which is more or less of a reddish colour, is in such a decomposed state on its surface, that at a short distance it would be readily mistaken for a soft sandstone. Even in the more solid parts, when struck with a hammer it readily falls into angular pieces. Its texture varies considerably, being both fine and coarse; but in all parts the felspathic element predominates. The striking feature in this rock is the number of dykes by which it is traversed. These, generally speaking, have a strike from north to south, and a dip at a high angle of 80 or 85° towards the east.

In all the granite hills of these regions, there are visibly two classes of dykes, which are distinguishable from each other by their colour—black ones, which are generally dark-coloured coarse-grained porphyries, and red ones, which are for the most part pink felsites or fine-grained porphyries. Both of these are much disintegrated, but the former more so than the latter. On

* See Dr. Beke's description of Midian, p. 332.

an east and west section about a quarter of a mile in length, out of eleven of the dark-coloured dykes, only two stood up to form peaks; the remaining nine, being softer than the granite, were cut down so as to form hollows and heaps of *débris*.

About half a mile up this valley, upon its south side, a bluff about 30 feet in height rises perpendicularly from the top of a large mound. This appears to show a junction of the granite and conglomerate; but the two externally appear to be so merged into each other that it is difficult to draw a marked line between them. The top of the bluff is covered with two horizontal bands of sand and rounded stones about six feet in thickness. On its southern side, beneath this cap there is a face of decomposing felspathic granite, traversed by greenish-coloured dykes, which include within themselves small angular fragments probably derived from some earlier-formed dyke which they have traversed. Passing round to the east side, there is an apparent gradation into red earthy bands, very like a hard clay, which in their turn merge on the north side into a brecciated conglomerate, which faces the sandstone beds on the opposite side of the valley. This conglomerate varies considerably in texture, containing not only pebbles, but also large boulders. Facing this bluff, upon the opposite side of the valley, which is here considerably narrowed, there is a corresponding bluff formed wholly of conglomerate. The upper part of this, which is made up of a coarse material, the stones it contains being as large as a cocoa-nut, lies unconformably upon a bed of finer material.

This lower bed in its upper portions is a gritty sandstone, but as it descends it passes into a fine conglomerate. Being much softer than the rock which caps it, it is rapidly being undermined, and large blocks of the coarse conglomerate from above are in consequence continually falling. These blocks, although they are made up of similar, if not the same, material as the neighbouring granite rocks, form, as far as their durability is concerned, a far superior stone—under the hammer the one giving a dull hollow earthy sound, and the other a clear sharp metallic ring.

Passing this bluff to the north side of the valley, we come on a gradually sloping plane of sandstone, grit, and conglomerate, the surface of which has been worn into a series of round hummock-shaped forms, each about four feet in height. Winding in and out between these there are smooth narrow channel-shaped hollows, looking as if at times they formed courses along which water had flowed; and, in fact, down one of these a small and rapid stream of water was descending, at the time of my visit, towards a palm-grove which occupies the bottom of the valley. In places where a cutting has been made from the valley into the hummocked plane

of conglomerate and sandstone, the unconformability just spoken of is strikingly seen in several outliers, the tops of which are made up of conglomerate, which joins in an irregular line the sandstone of their lower portions.

About three quarters of a mile up the valley, on its north side there is an exposure, about 40 yards in length and from 20 to 30 feet in height, which exhibits a curious juxtaposition of sandstone, conglomerate, and breccia.

Not far from the place where this section is exhibited, and on the same side of the valley, there are the ruins of a temple called by the inhabitants the Mosque of Moses, which for the most part is built of large square blocks of a fine-grained and perfectly white alabaster. In the bed of the valley there were many large, tolerably angular blocks of this stone, which had evidently travelled down from the interior, where the inhabitants stated that at six hours' distance there was a mountain or a large hill wholly composed of this material, which, if like the samples seen, must be of an excellent quality for building-purposes.

A little further inland from this temple, where the valley forks, the sandstone crosses to the south side, and there exposes a section near 60 feet in height. On the top of this there are some two or three feet of the coarse conglomerate, which lie on sandstone beds dipping about 4° N.N.W. This sandstone is made up of some eighteen or twenty bands of a light yellow, fine-grained, quartzose material. Interstratified with these bands are one or two layers of an argillaceous shelly material, one of which contains several narrow veins of gypsum, each about half an inch in thickness, and, lower down the valley, also a decided quantity of common salt.

Rocks from Madian.

(All these, unless specially mentioned, were obtained from dykes traversing the granite. The first four were determined microscopically.)

1. Basalt, fine-grained, and of a greenish colour.
2. Diabase, fine-grained, even-textured, dense, and of a blackish green colour.
3. Diabase, only differs from No. 2 in being slightly greener and of a finer texture.
4. Diabase, slightly greener than Nos. 2 and 3.
5. Red Porphyry, compact, fine-grained, with hornblende.
6. Granite, highly felspathic, with but little mica, of a pinkish colour. A rock penetrated by dykes.
7. Granite similar to No. 6, but having small fissures containing dolomite.
8. Granite, similar to No. 6, but containing two felspars—one triclinic, and the other orthoclase.
9. Granite, greyish and much disintegrated, and thickly traversed by dykes.
10. Porphyry, a dark-coloured base, thickly covered with small white crystals of felspar.

11. Porphyry, like No. 10, but with the felspar crystals long and acicular.
12. Dolerite, with brownish yellow olivine, of a vesicular structure, the cavities being in part filled with carbonate of lime. This was obtained from a boulder, of which there are many, all probably having their origin further up the wady to the east.
13. Degraded Basalt, like No. 1, both being found in small angular fragments in the interior of a dyke on the east side of the wady.

Madian to Omaider.—From Madian, continuing northwards along the east side of the Gulf of Akaba, the sandstone continued for some 4 or 5 miles, but in places apparently pierced by the granite, which at one time it probably covered, and towards the flanks of which it was now approaching.

On the west side of the gulf, although the hills were 15 miles distant, the dykes by which they were penetrated were distinctly visible.

As we neared the granite on the eastern side, the sandstone gradually sloped up towards it, or, in other words, dipped to the south or south-east, suggesting the idea just stated, that at one time it wholly buried these mountains which now raise themselves so high above it. When we were opposite what ought to have been the line of junction of the two, the stratification of the sandstone became so broken, and the outline of the decomposing granite so indefinite, that the relation of the two was not distinctly visible. The next object of geological interest was a flank of Jebel Tauran, which projected as a prominent bluff, the face of which formed a high and almost perpendicular cliff, through the centre of which was a cañon-looking gulch cleaving it from top to bottom. The height of this, if any reliance can be given to a rough calculation based on its altitude as taken by our captain, must have been over 2000 feet, which would almost put the crevasse-like opening on a par with a Western-American cañon.

Bir el Máshiyah.—A few miles to the north of this is the headland of Bir el Mashiyah, at which place another opportunity was given for visiting the shore. Here there is decided evidence that the land of this gulf and, probably in connection with it, that of its neighbour the Gulf of Suez, are rapidly rising.

Running from the granite hills, which here recede some three or four miles from the shore-line, across a gently sloping plane which joins them with the sea, there are numerous regularly built mounds, like so many partially completed railway embankments, reaching from the mountains to within half a mile of the water's edge. These appear externally to be made up of materials derived from the hills from the foot of which they spring; but at several points a white rock can be seen cropping out, show-

ing this detrital matter to be only a covering. This rock is a pure soft lime-stone of coarse texture, on the surface of nearly every square foot of which the section of a coral can be seen; but these, along with other fossils collected, remain yet to be described.

The only one of these mounds which I had an opportunity of examining was about 90 feet in height, and showed an exposure of about 30 feet of this limestone, as measured from its base, which is about 10 feet above sea-level. From this it would appear that there must have been an elevation of at least 40 feet.

From this place up to Akaba there are many of these old reefs, indicated by the numerous white patches which protrude through the heaps of dark-coloured *débris* from the granite mountains, most of which are at much higher elevations than the one just referred to, some being especially visible on the flat plain near Omaider.

In confirmation of these indications of an elevation, I may add that Captain Evans, a Commodore of the P. & O. Co.'s fleet, stated to me that in the Gulf of Suez there are reefs which twenty years ago could with impunity have been sailed over, but have now to be avoided, the two most remarkable of these being:—one at the entrance to the Gulf of Suez, where the soundings which were at one time 7 and $7\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms, are now only 3 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms; and the other at the head of the gulf, called the Newport shoal, where there is a like decrease in depth.

I am told that indications of a shallowing of the water in these seas may be seen by comparing an old chart with one of recent construction; the origin of it, apparently, can only be accounted for in one of two ways—by an elevation of the sea-bottom, or a piling-up of drifted materials by currents.

As an additional proof of this rising of the land, I may quote from Dr. Beke the official report of the British Consul at Jeddah, on the Arabian Coast, who says, "the sea on that coast is gradually receding, owing to the formation of coral reefs," the geological interpretation of which is evidently that the coast-line is being elevated.

That such elevations and perhaps oscillations should take place is not unnatural, considering the wonderfully volcanic nature of the adjoining peninsula of Arabia, examples of which may be seen in the Trachonitis of Wetzstein or the Hauran of Burton and Drake in the north, and the many traces of varied volcanic phenomena from the shores of the Persian Gulf in the east to Jemen in the south-west. In addition to these already known localities, it may be stated, on the authority of Yakut,

the Arabian geographer of the thirteenth century, that many, although once chronicled, now remain to be rediscovered. No less than 28 harras, or volcanic districts, are described and their position identified by him, all of which are to be found in the highlands and interior of the peninsula. The list of these is as follows:—

Harra of	Autâs.	Harra of	Abbad.
„	Tabûk.	„	Udhra.
„	Takda or Nudka.	„	Asás.
„	Hakl.	„	Gallas.
„	al-Himâra.	„	Kuba.
„	Ragil.	„	al-Kaus.
„	Rahis.	„	Lubu.
„	Ragla.	„	Laflaf.
„	Rumah.	„	Lailā.
„	Sulaim.	„	Másar.
„	al-Sarg.	„	Maitan.
„	Sauran.	„	Wakim.
„	Darig.	„	al-Wabana.
„	Dargad.	„	Banu Hilal.

Referring to the above list I may quote the following paragraph from Dr. Beke's pamphlet, 'Mount Sinai a Volcano':—*

"Among the numerous volcanoes found to exist within the Arabian peninsula, the only one known to have been in activity within the historic period is the Harrat el Nar ('fire-harra') situate to the north-east of Medina in the neighbourhood of Khaibur, in about 26° 30′ north latitude, and 40° east longitude; which, besides being traditionally said to have been in an active state six centuries before Mohammed, had actually an eruption in the time of the prophet's successor, Omar. To the north-west of this 'fire-harra' lies that known as the Harra of (the tribe of) Udhra: again, to the north of this, is the Harra of Tabuk, so called from the station of that name on the Hadj road from Damascus to Mekka, the position of which is about 28° 15′ north latitude and 37° east longitude; and beyond this last, further to the north, and consequently between it and the northernmost Harra of the Râdjil, or Trachonitis, is the Harra Radjlâ."

Rocks from Bir el Máshiyah.

(These are all taken from dykes. The first two have been determined microscopically.)

1. Diorite, a greenish-grey compact rock, the character of which is almost entirely disguised.

* Published by Tinsley Brothers, London, 1873, p. 12.

2. Felsite with epidote and chlorite. In general appearance this is a compact, fine-grained, light-green rock, not unlike an epidosite.
3. Porphyritic micaceous granite. The base of this, through which large white crystals of felspar are disseminated, is irregular in texture, being mostly composed of small flakes of a dark-coloured mica.
4. Porphyry consisting of a compact, dark purple base, and well-defined crystals of pink orthoclase.

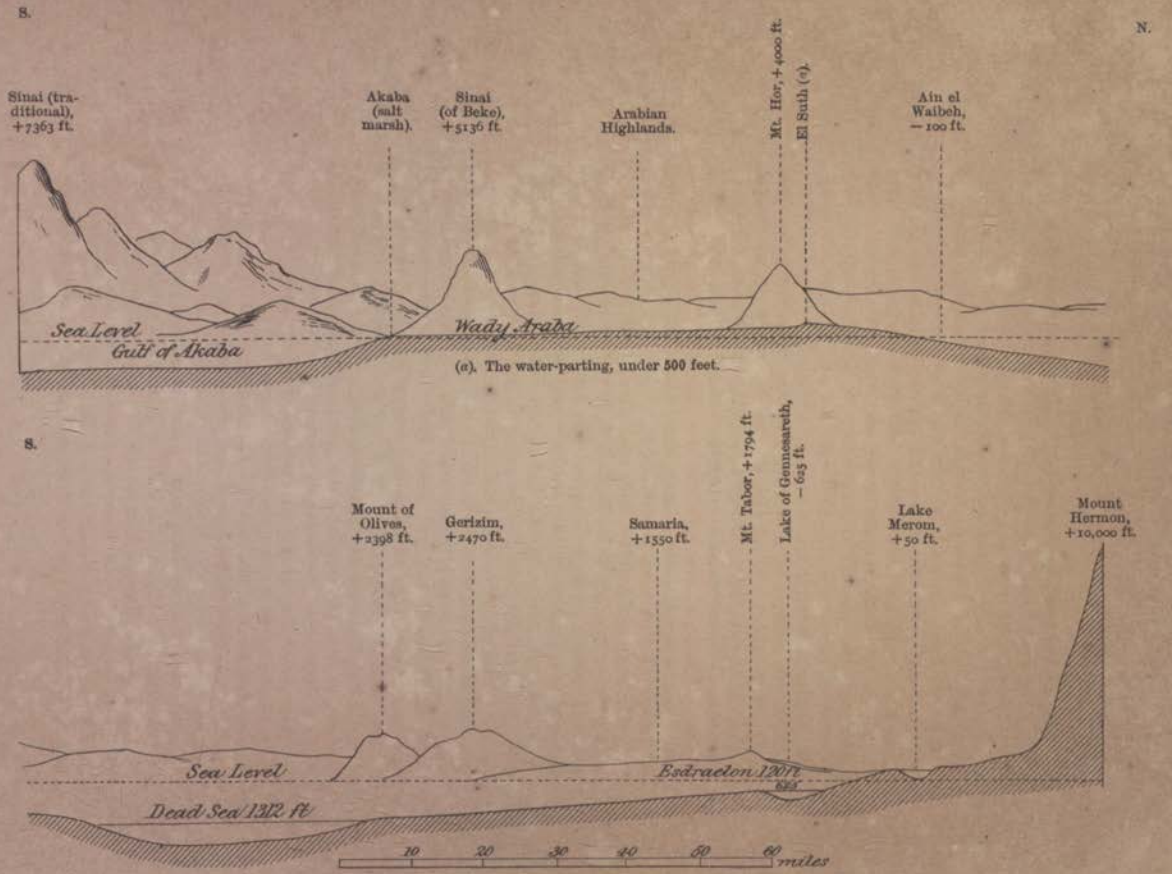
Omaider to Akaba.—Opposite to Omaider on the Sinaitic side, flat-topped outliers are to be seen capping the granite. These are of a yellowish colour and apparently soft, and at this place show a regular stratification, dipping 3° or 4° towards the north. In the distance, between gaps in these hills, a long flat-topped mountain or edge of a tableland is visible, apparently composed of the same material as the outliers, which afterwards proved to be a soft whitish limestone. On the west coast these outliers are more or less continuous up to the head of the gulf, whilst on the east side there is only the granite and its long heaps of *débris* stretching down towards the shore. Looking at these outliers from a distance, it is at once noticed that the granite surface on which they rest is invariably flat, showing that it had been planed down to an even surface before the deposition of the superincumbent beds, which in their turn, by the comparison of the flat tops they now cover with the adjoining serrated ridges of granite, which at one time it is probable that they also overspread, show the immense amount of denudation that has been going on since their removal.

Wady Araba (see figs. 1 and 2).—When within five or six miles of Akaba, the relation of this gulf to the broad and open valley of the Araba, leading northwards towards the Dead Sea, is strikingly observable. Although upon the east and west the ground is high, before one (to the north) it is so level that it is almost impossible to indicate the point at which the sea and land meet. Looking up this trench from the south, in the distance the mountains upon the right and left appear to grow lower, until by sloping downwards they finally vanish in two points upon a line forming an horizon for earth, sea, and sky.

Looking at the map, it will be seen that the Gulf of Akaba forms one extremity of a long north-and-south hill-bound trough, the other extremity of which is beyond the Lake of Gennesareth, at the northern end of the valley of the Jordan, a distance of more than 200 miles. An east-and-west profile across this trough, taken a few miles above Akaba, is represented by the eastern end of the section (fig. 1).

When standing in it you appear to be in an almost flat valley, about five miles in width, having no perceptible rise towards the

FIG. 1.—*APPROXIMATE SECTION FROM THE GULF OF AKABA TO THE VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.* *To face page 537.*



north, but to the east and west rising gently towards the flanks of precipitous granite hills, its deepest portion, which is marked by a north-and-south line of vegetation, being nearer to its western side than to its eastern, as shown in the section. By actual observation, however, it appears that the boundaries, which are apparently hills, are only the serrated edges of two tablelands, which on either side rise about 2000 feet above the sea—broadly speaking, the western one being chiefly granite capped with limestone, and the eastern one being granite capped with sandstone and conglomerate. The consequence of this is, that the high mountains, as seen from Akaba and the Araba, are from the tableland comparatively low hills.

Taking a section from south to north, from Akaba up the Araba, through the Dead Sea and up the valley of the Jordan past Gennesareth (fig. 2), it will be seen that the greater portion of the surface of this ground is below the level of the sea, and all that separates the Dead Sea, which is in a depression about 1300 feet below the neighbouring oceans, from the Gulf of Akaba is a slight rise of from 200 to 500 feet.

Therefore, should there have been an elevation of the land in operation, as appears to be indicated, it is very probable that at no very remote geological period the Gulf of Akaba extended many miles further to the north, having been bounded on its east and west sides by the before-mentioned high tablelands; and should this ancient gulf be restored (which would apparently be an engineering work far less difficult than the recently-constructed trench between Suez and Port Said), Jerusalem, Damascus, and other Syrian towns would again be in communication with the Indian Ocean, and fleets like those of Solomon might ply up and down the now entirely deserted Gulf of Akaba.

The section illustrating this depression (fig. 2), which will explain itself, is only an approximation, and is here used to add my observations to similar ones that have been made by others on this singularly interesting depression.

Akaba.—At Akaba (fig. 2), as at many other places, the granite is traversed by so many dykes that they could not but take part in the formation of peaks. Their general direction is in a parallel line towards the north-east, and at a high angle of inclination to the south-east.

Behind Akaba, two good analogous sections are to be seen on the eastern side of Wady Araba, at the entrance to a small wady called Wady Ithem [Etham]. The surface of the ground through which these sections are cut commences about half a mile from the sea, and terminates at a distance of a little over a mile, sloping at an angle of about 3° up towards the mountains. The distance apart

of these sections at their upper or eastern end, where they are about 30 feet in height, is about 100 yards, and at their lower or western end, where they merge into the sloping plane through which they are cut, about half a mile.

Looking at these generally, they consist of a mass of earth, pebbles, and boulders, lying on the denuded edges of granitic rocks and felspathic dykes. The pebbles and boulders are of the same nature as the rocks on which they lie; and at the eastern end of the sections near the mountains it would appear that the pebbles, and especially the boulders, are not only larger but also more angular than those a mile farther away.

The mode of accumulation of the upper stratum of alluvial material is strikingly shown at several points along the section. The material, starting from the mountains (which at one time probably extended a short distance westwards), through various causes, but chiefly that of gravity, gradually travelled down the slope towards the sea. On coming to a hollow it steadily filled it, the stones of each layer rolling over their predecessors until the original slope was regained, the result of which has been to give, at different points along the section, several groups of radiating bands.

The granite is of a pinkish colour, and consists chiefly of felspar and a little quartz, whilst the mica is barely visible. It contains numerous dykes, which vary from dark green to olive-green in colour. At the junction of several of these with the granite, and running through them both, are flakes of white carbonate of lime about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in thickness, and having a glistening crystalline surface which fill up joints in the rock. All the rock containing this carbonate of lime (not only the dykes but also the granite) crumbles under the hammer like a dry clay, whilst at the distance of a yard from the dykes, where this carbonate of lime does not exist, the stone is hard and compact, and when struck gives a sharp clear ring.

Rocks from Akaba.

(The first three of these were examined microscopically.)

1. Dolerite, large-grained, containing some acicular crystals, which are probably apatite. This is an even-grained compact rock of a reddish-grey colour.
2. Dolerite similar to No. 1; but the felspar is more degraded, and the rock itself of rather a darker colour.
3. Syenite with altered hornblende, orthoclase, a little triclinic felspar, mica and quartz. In general appearance the rock is very like Nos. 1 and 2.
4. Granite, of a pinkish-white colour, and with a scarcity of mica. From the vicinity of a doleritic dyke.

5. Granite, consisting of white and pink felspar, mica, and quartz.
6. Granite, with chlorite, and fissures filled with crystalline calcite.
7. Granite with more chlorite than No. 6.

From Akaba our journey eastwards was confined to Wady Ithem [Etham] and the various wadies and plains which branch out of it.

General appearance of Mountain-Wadies.—These wadies, winding in and out between the granite hills, may be described as narrow defiles of great length. They vary in width from 100 yards to half a mile, and wind in and out between almost perpendicular walls of granite, making the approach to every turn or bend in their course appear as if it were a terminus.

Under foot are large boulders, stones of various sizes, small pebbles and sand, giving the place the appearance of a dried-up channel, which formed the bed of some large and rapid river. On inquiry it was found that no body of water ever flowed down these defiles—a fact that might have been anticipated by observing that the beds of grit and sand were cut through by small channels not 6 inches in depth, instead of being left, as would have been the case in a river, in one flat stone-covered surface. Whilst amongst these mountains, I experienced three days of continuous rain, after which I did not see anywhere more than the faintest trickling of water—from which fact, in conjunction with others, I think we may conclude that in these wadies there are conditions very analogous to those of river-beds, but that in their formation water has played but little part.

Another striking phenomenon of these wadies is the presence of perfectly perpendicular walls of *débris*, which often form boundaries upon both right and left.

These walls vary considerably in their height; sometimes they are only 1 or 2 feet in height, but generally from 6 to 10 feet, whilst in many places, by actual measurement, they were from 30 to 60 feet, and occasionally even still higher. The lower ones (which are more generally met with) are formed of greyish gritty sand and small pebbles, and, as compared with the higher walls made up of sand, stones like cocoa-nuts, and large boulders, are of a noticeably fine material—the former looking like a face of Roman cement, and the others like a conglomerate.

The most striking point, however, about these walls, especially in those about 6 or 10 feet in height, is the almost perfect and unbroken square edge they form with the plain from which they descend, these clear edges being in lengths varying from a few yards up to 100 yards. Comparing the various walls together, it is seen that these several characters depend upon the fineness or coarseness of the materials of which they are composed; and it may be generally stated that their length, their fine finish,

and the squareness of edge they form with the upper plain, vary inversely with their coarseness, whilst their height varies directly; the coarser the material, the higher the wall. In taking a section transversely to the length of one of these wadies, we may obtain a step-like outline descending from the mountains on either side; but more generally the form obtained is that of two rapid slopes from the hills, each terminating in a wall, leaving between them the level central part of the wady, described as being in some respects analogous to a river channel. This central channel, in which the boulders, which are often of great size, are found lying in heaps and lines parallel to the bounding walls, may vary from 50 to 200 yards in width. From the same characters being often seen in opposite walls, it is probable that before an initial slope was formed, down which water and materials in general would tend to travel, they were joined from side to side.

Their growth into the truly perpendicular forms which they now present, evidently arises from the materials of which they are built up being so regularly disposed that there is nothing left to produce unequal disintegration; that is to say, a disintegration commenced at any one point is at once or very rapidly carried in a perpendicular direction equally over the plain in which the commencement of the disintegration took place, the materials being so loosely placed together that for support they are mutually dependent; take one particle away and its neighbour falls. This cliff-formation is strikingly seen in the lower and more common of these walls, which are made up of pebbles, grit, and sand. On attempting to walk within a foot of the upper edge of one of these, a vertical layer separates from the top of the wall and falls to form a conical heap below, which is afterwards removed by wind and water. In nature, however, instead of an external pressure acting on the upper surface, a similar result is produced by the action of the little water which occasionally trickles down these wadies, and still more by the almost continuous working of a sand-drift along the lower portion of the face of these walls, by which they are slightly undermined. When sufficiently undermined in this way (seldom more than 6 inches), the unsupported material above, having little or no lateral attachment to the contiguous mass, of necessity falls. After a little rain this action is strikingly rapid, the slight bond between the particles being loosened by the soaking-in of the water.

As these walls are cut further back and approach the hills, the mass of material in which they are formed being thicker, they are naturally higher, in addition to which it may be noted that they are also coarser and have lost much of their smooth finish,

which latter character is apparently due to the larger masses of which they are built up having more hold upon each other, one of them not moving without disturbing its neighbour.

Had the materials of which these walls are built been interlaminated or cemented in any way, no portion of it could have given way without disturbing that which was contiguous to it, by acting on it as a cantilever.

This may be looked at generally by considering cliffs or walls the component parts of which are so arranged that their greatest length lies in a horizontal direction. In such walls, where we get this horizontal interlamination, whether of massive bands of rock, fissile shales, or only layers of stone, on their being undermined, generally speaking, no portion of them can give way without disturbing those parts with which they are in contact, especially those lying above, which, cantilever-like, they tend to prize upwards and then cause to fall outwards, this outward tendency being aided by the material from above slipping down over that which has fallen from below. The result of this is the production of a slope, instead of a clear perpendicular wall, such as is produced by the direct fall of an uncemented fine material.

The unbroken edges of these cliffs, although in part due to the nature and arrangement of the material of which they are formed, are also in part due to a cause similar to that assigned for the unworn edges of some of the American cañons, namely, the comparative absence of rain—the little that does fall being hardly sufficient to affect those of coarse material, whilst those made of fine material are immediately soaked, and the undermined portions at once fall instead of remaining to be channelled down with gutters.

It has been observed that the great heaps and long lines of boulders, so often seen in the centre and other parts of these wadies, can hardly be thought to have assumed their rounded forms and to have come into their present positions by the agency of water (which at first sight is so suggestive both as a motive power and also as a polishing agent), the district being riverless and also, comparatively speaking, rainless.

The reason of their waterworn appearance is apparently in great part due to the cutting effect of an almost perpetual sand-blast; but the cause of the central position they so commonly occupy is not so obvious. It may have been acquired by their having simply rolled down the sides of the mountains when they extended further into the wadies than they do at present; but in many cases it is probable that the descent was far more gradual. Whilst riding along the base of some of the cliffs of sand and conglomerate just described, on looking up, long lines of boulders

were often seen waiting to be undermined and to fall below. Many could be seen that had fallen, whilst others were barely balanced and ready to topple over on the least disturbance.

Each time one of these falls it travels a certain distance forwards; and as cliffs are continually being formed in the centre of the wady to work back towards the hills, steps are continually approaching these boulders, down which they may roll and approach the central line of cliff-formation, where those from one side of the valley meet, stop, and accumulate with those coming from the opposite side.

Such modes of transit as these may be suggestive in accounting for the presence of erratic blocks so often seen not only in various parts of Arabia, but also in other countries, as, for example, in Persia, where they have been seen to have travelled distances of five and six miles—in certain cases, perhaps giving a clue to those phenomena which otherwise might have found a satisfactory solution either in a coat of glaciers or a sea of icebergs.

In the cases quoted large blocks have apparently travelled distances of a quarter of a mile by the breaking down of about a hundred feet of modern alluvium. How far, it may be asked, would blocks have travelled had the strata measured thousands instead of hundreds of feet?

With regard, therefore, to the general appearance of the beds of these mountain wadies, it may be briefly stated, in conclusion, that their characters are, in the main, rather due to a stream of sand than to water; small furrows formed in the central parts of the wady retreat towards the hills by being undermined and then falling by their weight. By this falling, boulders, often 20 feet in diameter, are rolled forward, and strewn across the plain from the hills towards a central line in which they accumulate. Whilst all this is going on, an almost continuous draft of air up or down these funnel-like defiles is in operation, carrying sand to polish the scattered *débris*, thus helping in the production of appearances not unlike those of some ancient river-bed, in which action it is aided by a slight trickling of water after the winter showers.

Sand-blast.—Having spoken of the movement of sand as an agent in the undermining of cliffs and the polishing of rocks, although, perhaps, often before observed by others, I may here mention what was seen of its other effects in these districts.

A great portion of the country lying between Nakhl and Suez is covered with a thick superficial deposit of fine reddish sand, which, like all other sand, is set in motion whenever there is the slightest movement in the air.

This, although an almost perpetual action, is only to be seen under very favourable circumstances. By placing yourself so

that the sandbank, or piece of ground you are observing, is between yourself and the sun, a slight smoke-like vapour, which from other positions would be invisible, is to be seen sweeping over the surface of the ground. The presence of this drift may also be recognised by placing the face within 10 or 12 inches of the ground, when fine particles of sand will be seen rolling along over each other; and on putting the ear near to these a slight rustling noise may often be detected.

By taking a flat piece of wood and using it as a straight-edge, I made several practically level patches of ground, on which I was enabled to see the action of the drift in the formation of ridges. Although when standing up no movement in the sand could be detected, yet on stooping down I perceived that ridges were being formed, not simultaneously over the whole surface, but commencing to windward. The crest of each of these small undulations appeared to be invariably covered with the redder particles of sand, whilst the yellow ones were left in the hollows.

In the case of larger ridges, which were about 6 inches in height, their crests were composed of the larger particles, which, as far as colour was concerned, could not be distinguished from those forming the hollows. Small movements of this description are constantly going on; but in a gale, judging from experience, the results must be considerably greater. When a moderately heavy wind is blowing, it is almost impossible to face the "blast." On your hands a tingling sensation is felt; and on lowering them towards the ground this rapidly and irregularly increases in power until they are within a foot of the ground, when it becomes unbearable, the feeling produced being not unlike that occasioned by drawing off the keeper of an electro-magnetic machine.[1]

Another and more important action of the sand-drift is the cutting of the surface of all stones which are exposed upon the desert—a fact which has often before been noticed, and may be well exemplified by the Sphinx near Cairo, and two faces of Cleopatra's Needle at Alexandria.[2] Portions which are buried, or otherwise protected, are not cut, the consequence being that almost every stone, when picked up, presents two surfaces which differ in appearance, one being uneven and rough, whilst the other is pitted and polished. In the district especially referred to, near Nakhl, where the stones scattered in the desert are chiefly limestone, the definite character given to them by this sand is such that it could not be seen without being remarked.

[1] See Dr. Beke's description of the violent storm at Akaba on the night of February 6th, 1874, chap. viii.

[2] Lately brought to England, and now about to be erected on the Thames Embankment.

All have a peculiar polish, looking as if they had been smeared with grease, a lustre nearly represented in the fractured surface of some specimens of witherite.

In addition to this, they are all, more or less, pitted with small cup-shaped hollows, which apparently indicate the softer portions of the stone. Some few have cut upon their surfaces curious worm-shaped furrows; whilst others have exhibited such differences in hardness that their softer portions have been so far cut into and carried away that the remainder is as ragged in its outline as the root of a tree, for which in many instances they might readily be mistaken.

Should these stones hereafter become completely buried, as many already are, future investigators will find in them marks as clearly indicative of their origin as the rounded forms of water-worn pebbles or the angular and scratched faces in beds of glacial drift. Just as we infer from the latter the existence of former glaciers, so will they infer the former presence of deserts and sand-drifts.

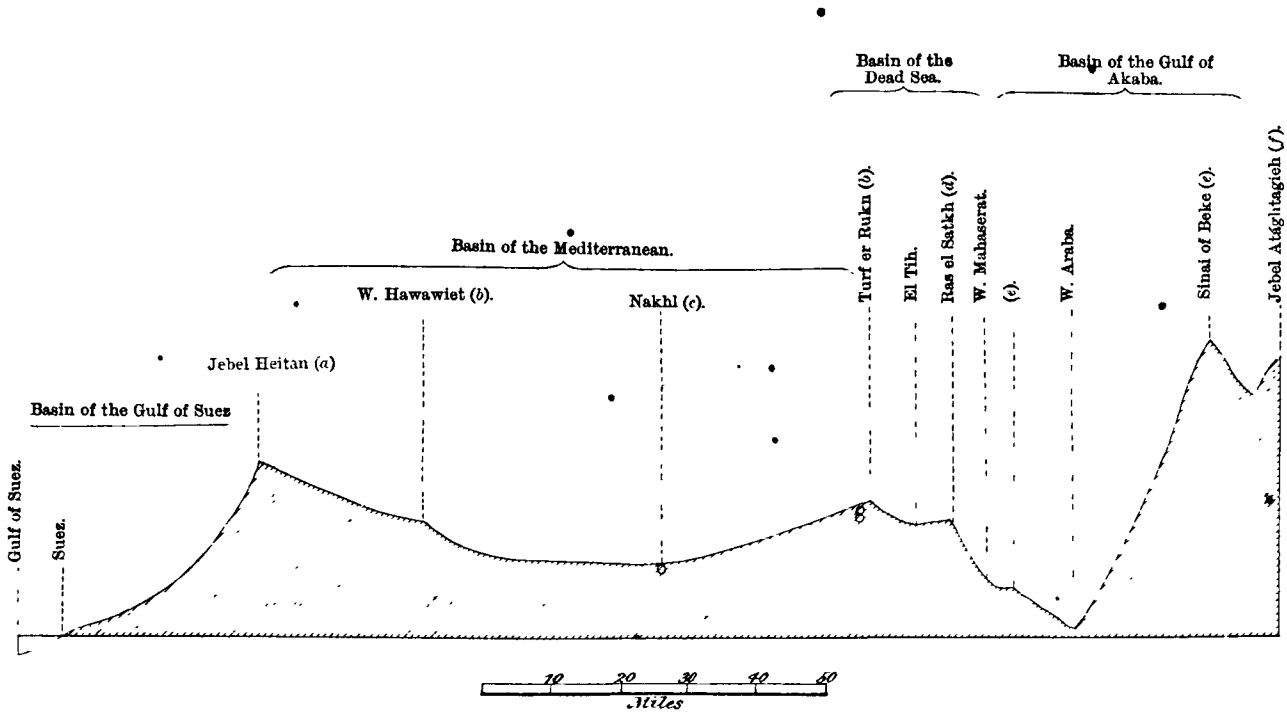
Rocks from Wady Ithem (the first five of these were examined microscopically) :—

1. Diabase, dark greenish in colour, compact and tough.
2. Diabase, more compact than No. 1, from which it also differs in containing a small quantity of disseminated iron pyrites.
3. Dolerite, blackish green, dense and compact.
4. Hornstone, whitish green, compact, crystalline, traversed by fine fissures containing carbonate of lime.
5. Dolerite, greenish grey and compact.
6. Granite, pinkish in colour and with little mica.
7. Felsite, pinkish in colour, containing a very little hornblende.
8. Porphyry, a pinkish base, with white crystals of felspar and a very little hornblende.
9. Porphyry, differs from No. 8 in being slightly darker in colour.
10. Granite, greyish in colour, of a coarse texture, and somewhat porphyritic.
11. Granite, pinkish in colour, with bronze-coloured mica.
12. Porphyry, of a pink colour, with hornblende.
13. Prophyry, differs from No. 12 in being of a greenish grey colour.
14. Porphyry, fine-grained and without hornblende.
15. Granite, consisting of felspar, mica, and very little quartz.
16. Granulitic granite.
17. Quartz-porphyry, of a pinkish colour.
18. Porphyry, of a bluish grey colour.
19. Syenite, of a dark-green colour, containing very little quartz, and very little hornblende.
20. Porphyry, pinkish grey and fine-grained.
21. Porphyry, with hornblende.

With regard to the granitic hills lying between Akaba and Petra, as they have so many points in common, a description of one of them may, in many respects, suffice for the remainder.

FIG. 2.—*APPROXIMATE SECTION OF THE PLATEAU OF TIH.* (Vertical scale greatly exaggerated.)

To face page 545.



(*a*). Nummulitic limestone.
(*b*). Limestone.
(*c*). Limestone like chalk.
(*d*). Red Sandstone, Limestone, and Flints.
(*e*). Granite.
(*f*). Granite capped with sandstone.

The one selected is Mount Bághir,[1] also known as Jebel-e'-Nūr or the "Mountain of Light," which by Dr. Beke has been identified as the True "Mount Sinai" (see fig. 2).

This mountain, which is situated on the east side of Wady Araba, and on the west side of Wady [Etham] Ithem, which it overhangs, is about 100 miles in a north-easterly direction from the traditional Sinai, and 12 miles from the fortress of Akaba. In its general outline it is bold, terminating in three well-defined small peaks, which distinguish it from the surrounding hills. Measured from the plain, out of which it rises, it is about 3000 feet in height, or about 5000 feet above sea-level. It consists of a mass of red or pinkish granite, which in places where it is much weathered is of a dark brown hue. In those places where disintegration has been at work, the felspar and lighter mica have to a great extent been washed away, leaving a rough gravelly surface of quartz, which crumbles under the feet. This granite contains comparatively but little mica; and in places it merges into quartz and massive felspar alone. On the north-west side of the mountain a portion of the granite looks at a distance like a coarse brownish yellow sandstone, weathering with rounded surface, in which many cavities can be seen, generally about the size of a cocoa-nut. In several large boulders of this rock these cavities have so increased in size as to be now represented by small caves, one of which was about 20 feet in diameter and 10 or 12 feet in height at its entrance, sloping down with a dome-shaped roof and curved sides towards the back. No angular forms are visible, which shows that the granite has flaked off in curved laminæ. On striking this rock with a hammer it has not the clear ring of a solid stone, but gives a dull sound, owing to the surface being so disintegrated and having the tendency to split off in flakes, which can easily be separated with the sharp edge of the hammer.

The peaks on the summit of this mountain are composed of granite; the hollows between them mark the position and direction in which the mass is traversed by dykes; and it may be stated as a general rule for this mountain, that the dykes do not protrude above the granite, but all tend to produce hollows. One exception to this, however, was seen on the N.E. side of the mountain, near a well, where a dyke formed a clearly-defined ridge running up towards the summit. These dykes, which are generally of a dark green colour, vary in width from 1 foot to 18 feet, and perhaps more. When struck with a hammer, in many places they appear to be quite earthy, crumbling up like dry clay. The general direction of these and others in the neighbouring mountains is from between north and east to some point between

[1] See Dr. Beke's description, chap. viii., p. 380.

south and west, often striking in long parallel lines across ridges of the hills.

Rocks from Jebel Bághir (Sinai), (the first three of these were examined microscopically):—

1. Dolerite, much decomposed, of a dark colour, loose texture, and a greyish exterior, owing to the weathering of the felspar.
2. Dolerite, portion of a compact, hard nodule, taken from the interior of the dyke of which No. 1 formed part.
3. Diabase, passing from porphyritic to aphanitic. The rock is black and dense; no structure is observable.
4. Granulitic granite, a fine-grained mixture of quartz and felspar, with finely distributed mica.
5. Granite, fine-grained and pinkish.
6. Mica and felspar, with very little hornblende, the whole forming an irregular greenish mass.
7. Granite, of a pinkish colour.
8. Granite, nearly all felspar.

Dykes.—The prominent part taken by dykes in giving the characteristic ruggedness to these granite hills has already been partially noted, as will be seen from the following observations of Dr. Oscar Fraas, 'Aus dem Orient,' where, at page 15, he says, "When on the summit of Serbal, in a circuit of about 1000 metres, rather more than less, I counted from our pinnacle 47 peaks, or, as might be plainly seen from those which were nearest to us, so many dykes of diorite which stood above the mass of granite. In the course of the incalculable ages during which these points had been exposed to the atmosphere, they had offered a different resistance to the weathering than had the granite with its felspars; and therefore as many diorite teeth stood out from the granite bed of Serbal as you could count points on the mountain."

From the observations made on these dykes at the various localities visited, which in part are confirmed by the specimens collected, it would seem that they may be divided into two classes—those of a red colour, and those of a dark green or black.

As a general rule the former are the harder of the two, and stand up as ridges which can be seen running up the sides of the mountains, and over their crests, or else appearing only as peaks, but in all cases producing serrations; whilst, on the other hand, the latter are generally soft and form trenches and hollows where the red ones would have formed ridges and peaks. Exceptional cases are to be seen where the black dykes are hard and have resisted degradation; but in the case of the red ones no exceptions were seen.

Both classes of these dykes, like the granites they traverse, are

highly felspathic, the red ones being generally compact felsites or fine-grained porphyrites, whilst those of a darker colour are generally porphyries in which small crystals of felspar are imbedded in a dark-coloured base.

Traversing several mountains near to Jebel-e'-Nŭr, and noticeably one called Jebel Atâghtagîeh, there are large dykes 12, 14, and even 20 feet in width, almost wholly composed of a soft material; yet, through having hard exteriors, they stand up so as to form a well-defined wall-like ridge. Through being thus composed of a soft central part or core cased in between two slabs of a harder material, disintegration has acted more rapidly on the interior portion than on the exterior, and has cut them out into a trench.

Up one of these trenches I ascended Mount Atâghtagîeh (see fig. 2). The dyke was throughout of a dark-green material, but slightly lighter in colour on its sides than in the middle. Its width was about 12 feet; 6 feet of the central part was soft and crumbled like dry clay when struck with the sharp edge of a hammer, whilst the 3 feet of casing on either side into which it graduated was hard and tough, in fact much more so than the granite through which it pierced.

The result of examinations of different portions of such dykes as these is given in the following list of rocks from Jebel Atâghtagîeh, from which it would appear that the interior portions of these dykes are apparently more siliceous, contain more olivine, more magnetite, and are decidedly more calcareous than the exterior portions; but as these and other similar specimens are intended to form the subject of a future investigation, the present statement must be received provisionally.

Rocks from Jebel Atâghtagîeh (the first four of these were examined microscopically):—

1. Quartziferous dolerite, from the *exterior* of a dyke, of which No. 2 is the interior. This is a dense, olive-green-coloured rock, readily scratched by a knife to a light-green streak.
2. Quartziferous dolerite from the *interior* of a dyke, of which No. 1 is the exterior. This is of a reddish colour and more granular than No. 1, from which it also differs in being decidedly calcareous and magnetic, and apparently containing more olivine and quartz.
3. Basalt from the *exterior* of a dyke, of which No. 4 is the interior. This is a compact and almost black, even-textured rock, and is slightly calcareous.
4. Dolerite, much degraded, from the *interior* of a dyke, of which No. 3 is the exterior. This is a greenish grey, loose-textured, granular rock, which is decidedly calcareous and also magnetic.
5. Pinkish granite, through which the above dykes penetrate.
6. Porphyry, red crystals in a green base.
7. Porphyry, of a greyish colour, containing acicular crystals of hornblende.

8. Porphyry like No. 7, but with large crystals of hornblende.
9. Porphyry, a compact felsitic mass.
10. Porphyry, darker-coloured than No. 9.
11. Porphyry, fine-grained and of a lavender colour.

Geological Formations.—When on the top of Mount Bághir, on looking from the north, by the east, round to the south-east, flat-topped hills were seen which from their shape were at once suspected not to be granitic, or, if granitic, to be capped by some other material. This conjecture was confirmed by visiting the top of Mount Atághtagíeh, on the summit of which there are two large patches of sandstone, each about 100 feet in thickness, which have apparently been deposited subsequently to the formation of the granite. The beds, which are nearly horizontal, have a parallelism with the gentle undulations of what appears to be the denuded surface of the granite on which they rest. In no place does the granite appear to penetrate into the beds above, or in any way to break their even line of stratification; nor, on the other hand, does the sandstone descend into any crevices or irregularly eroded cavities in the granite. The lower beds of this sandstone, which are about 3000 feet above sea-level, are composed of a coarse quartzose material very like that which would be derived from granite after the washing away of the lighter materials. The remaining beds higher up, with the exception of a bed near the summit, which is of a perfectly white, fine-grained, soft sandstone, are composed of a yellowish gritty sandstone.

Although carefully looked for, no organic remains were to be found. Scattered over the top of the mountain were some compact dark-coloured rocks, probably the remains of a dyke cutting through some neighbouring mountain from which they have been derived.

To the east and north of this mountain there were many flat-topped hills; and the beds, which here only formed caps, appeared in the distance to form the hills themselves, the cliff-like faces of which showed curious barrel-shaped outlines. This same formation, resting on the granite, is to be seen at the head of Wady Amran, where it stretches away eastwards towards the centre of Arabia, and southwards towards the somewhat similar beds which were seen at Madiān.

It has been asserted, on very good grounds, that in this portion of Arabia there are still remaining evidences of several once active volcanoes. Should these be discovered, they will in all probability be found amongst the sandstones on the eastern side of the great Arabian watershed; for had they existed on the western side, some traces of them must have been seen in the beds of the wadies which so rapidly descend towards the Red Sea.

Akaba to Suez (see fig. 2).—The northern end of the Gulf of Akaba having its shores bounded by granite hills, the consistency of which is tolerably equal throughout, the disintegration carried on by the sea has not tended to produce such an irregular outline as would have been formed had there been more variety in their character. At the north-western part of the gulf, however, between Ras el Musry (Mahaserat) and Jezíret Fír'ôn there is a slight exception to this. Here some soft limestones coming down to the coast between granite hills have been cut back to form a small bay, whilst their boundaries stand out as two small headlands. The rock composing these points is greyish in colour and granitic nature, but varies considerably both in tint and texture. Opposite to Jezíret Fír'ôn, or Pharaoh's Isle, it is somewhat pinkish, and contains well-formed plates of mica, of the size of a shilling, and even larger.

The limestone, which dips about 15° to the north-east, is in parts quite white; but the bulk of it is of a yellowish tinge. Near the granite, against the sides of which it evidently rests, there are beds of a strikingly bright pink colour. In places on this exposure, which is about 800 feet in thickness, it shows itself like a compact chalk; whilst in other parts it is earthy, but contains interposed bands of solid stone from two to four feet in thickness.

In the cliffs near Ras el Mahaserat there are beds of irregularly shaped flints and fossil remains, of which only a fragmentary specimen of an *Echinus* was collected. The valley up which these limestones run, called Wady Mahaserat, is identified by Dr. Beke as being Pi-ha-hiroth or "the entrance to the caves," traces of which are to be seen a few miles distant from the shore.

Leaving the Gulf of Akaba at its north-west extremity, the Hadj road, on which the pilgrims to and from Mecca annually travel, rapidly rises, being bounded on its north and south sides by long narrow reddish-coloured heaps of *débris*, made up, not only of granitic rocks, but also of fragments of limestone. A short distance beyond this the termination of these mounds is found in some reddish granitic hills, which for the most part are apparently porphyritic.

At about an elevation of 1000 feet you enter the upper part of Wady Mahaserat, bounded on its western side by the continuation of the same range of limestone rocks seen between Ras el Mahaserat and Jezíret Fír'ôn, dipping in apparently the same direction as before, 15° N.E.

The rock itself is compact in appearance, very like a hard chalk, and contains many fossil remains, portions of *Echini*, *Pectines* and *Ostreæ* being common.

On the east side of this valley are much-decomposed granite rocks, of ill-defined reddish and greenish colours, which merge from one to the other. Those of a reddish tint are felsites, and are, as usual, harder than the dark-green porphyries which they occasionally traverse.

Rocks from between Akaba and the Tih Plateau :—

1. Quartz porphyry with a green felsitic base, through which crystals of porphyry are disseminated.
2. Red porphyry.
3. Brown felsitic quartz porphyry.
4. Reddish brown porphyry.
5. Light-green porphyry.
6. Reddish purple porphyry.
7. Porphyry like No. 6, but with white crystals of felspar.
8. Basalt, of a dark green colour and thoroughly degraded.
9. Red quartz porphyry.
10. Greenish grey porphyry, much decomposed.
11. Altered pyromeride, of a yellowish colour, and with a mammillated surface.

A short distance further up this wady, at an elevation of about 1200 feet, the road suddenly turns to the left through a narrow gorge of chalk cliffs, and then ascends by a steep, zigzag, artificially formed pathway to the plateau of the Tih.

Both on the right and left side of this defile good exposures of cliff-sections are to be seen, in which there are several inaccessible cave-like openings. The rock, as before, is lithologically a chalk, containing numerous bands of flint.

These bands, which can be broken out in large slabs, the upper and lower surfaces of which are gently rounded into smooth undulating surfaces, average about four inches in thickness, and occur at about the same distance apart. Although they can be detached in large flat masses, through the number of vertical cracks by which they are traversed, they split into fragments when struck.

On the surface of this chalk rock, in one or two places, a slight efflorescence of common salt can be detected—an indication, perhaps, of the existence of larger quantities in the neighbourhood.

About 80 or 100 yards up the gorge the chalk rocks suddenly terminate, and abut against the almost perpendicularly down-turned beds of a yellowish rusty-looking limestone, the juncture of the two apparently marking the line of a N.N.E. fault.

In these yellow limestones flints were seen, and fragmentary fossil remains were common. All exposed surfaces of this rock are much eroded and weathered. In several large blocks which

had fallen from some bands in the upper portion of this cliff-like exposure, small crystals of brown oxide of iron (pseudomorphs of iron pyrites in combinations of the cube and octahedron) were common.

At an elevation of 1800 feet, or 600 feet above the gorge, a bluish grey, compact, fine-grained limestone is met with, in which numerous sections of *Nerinæa* are to be seen. A few small cavities, filled with minute scalenohedral forms of calcite, indicated the existence of other fossil forms.

At 2000 feet there is an exposure, about 40 feet in thickness, of yellowish earthy bands, containing narrow veins of gypsum from one to two inches in thickness, forming a cap to the *Nerinæa*-limestone.

From this there is a descent of about 100 feet into a small open plain, in which there are numerous exposures of a pinkish red (or pale *maroon-coloured*) sandstone. In the portion examined this was made up of a fine-grained quartzose material, containing a small quantity of lime, probably derived by infiltration from the calcareous beds with which it is so closely associated. One exception to the colour of these beds was seen in a soft and friable yellow band. The left side of the road, which is here in part an artificial formation, is built up of blocks of red sandstone, which were obtained in large, regularly squared, oblong masses by undermining several overhanging beds upon the right. In these red beds, as might perhaps have been anticipated, no trace of organic remains could be seen.

On nearing the summit of the tableland of the Tih, which by barometrical observation is about 2000 feet above the sea-level, a view looking down into a north-and-south gorge showed the relation of the red sandstones to the limestones before described. Upon the east flat surfaces of limestone were seen dipping sharply towards the east; and from these scarps, and especially from the one forming the right-hand wall of this north-and-south gorge, it would appear as if they once covered over the nearly horizontal sandstones on the left.

Descent of the Tih.—The striking feature of this desert plateau, when approached from the Akaba side, is its wonderful evenness of surface, which, from the fineness of the material with which it is covered, gives it an appearance not unlike an immense expanse of gravel walk. This material consists in great part of white quartz pebbles, which are intermingled with fine-grained porphyries and other felspathic rocks derived from some low peaks several miles away to the north. About eighteen miles across this flat country, at Turf er Rukn, the track enters between low hills forming the southern boundary of this great tableland, the sur-

face-contour of which, at this point, is represented by the letter V, the arms of which form a shallow trough-like drainage-area, one arm trending N.W. towards the Mediterranean, and the other to the N.E., towards the southern continuation of the Dead Sea, whilst the apex of the two is to the south.

Turf er Rukn, which is continued towards the north as a low and almost imperceptible rise of ground forming the water-parting between the V-shaped arms of the Tih, further to the south, rises about 400 feet above the plain as a long scarp of yellow limestone. Near the foot of the southern end of this scarp there is a small exposure of a yellowish sandstone, and also indications of a band of siliceous hæmatite running in a direction about one point to the south of west. This ore is easily distinguished by its dark colour, which contrasts strongly with the light-coloured sand on which it lies.

Beyond this, upon the right or north side of the road, there are some low ridges consisting of bands of limestone dipping towards the north. Intercalated with these bands are layers of flint which, on their exterior, very much resemble some dark-coloured portions of the rock in which they are imbedded.

This character of country, of limestone scarps on the left, and low ridges on the right, through which occasional glimpses of the great plateau of the Tih are to be seen, continues for nearly a day's journey.

After passing Jebel Duppa, the ranges on the right, growing higher, show a more definite character as compared with those upon the left. Whilst the latter remain horizontal, the former are almost turned on end, dipping at an angle of 45° to the north. They consist of limestones which are whitish at their base and yellowish near their summit. With them there are bands of flint, which, being tilted up with the rock in which they are stratified, stand up along the ridges of the hills, forming low parallel walls to hollow troughs. Numerous angular and apparently freshly broken fragments of these flints are strewn over the plain below, apparently broken by the more or less sudden expansion and contraction occasioned by the great variations in temperature, this action being probably aided by a jointed structure in the flint at the time of its removal from the limestone. That there are such variations in temperature may be inferred from the fact that many nights when we were in the desert the thermometer sank below zero, and shrubs and other objects were in the morning covered with a thick coating of hoar frost, this low temperature being invariably followed shortly after sunrise by a heat that readily scorched and peeled the skin from the face.

In addition to this it may be mentioned that several rounded

and apparently whole flints were seen, which, on being touched, fell to pieces, showing them to have been broken by some force that had not been violent in its action, but had simply divided them and not scattered the fragments.

Materials being in this way continually supplied from a mountain, then being broken by the sun and afterwards buried in the sand, may perhaps give a clue to the origin of certain breccias.

At the western end of this range there is a large and well-defined wady stretching away to the north-west into a low undulating country of chalk-like rocks. At the entrance to this there is a small, solitary hill of chalk resembling an island, and showing the steep northern dip which characterises the rocks along the southern side of this portion of the Hadj road.

At less than a mile past this a cutting has been made through a hill composed of fine-grained and perfectly white chalk, which gives a small but clear section of this rock, showing on its walls, and also in the ground over which you walk, a great continuity of bands of flint.

Looking at the upturned edges of these bands upon the floor of the cutting, in places they are seen to have been divided and then reunited, forming cavities which are filled with a material in appearance like the surrounding rock. At several points along the walls of these cuttings numerous irregular, coral-like concretions stand out, through the weathering away of the softer material which once surrounded them.

On the left-hand side of the road, it appeared as if the upturned chalky strata just referred to abutted against the horizontal yellow limestone which forms a more or less continuous ridge from Turf er Ruku to this point.

From the summit of any of the hills upon the right an extensive view of the greater portion of the Tih plateau is to be seen. Beyond the low water-parting which separates the drainage of the Mediterranean from that of the Dead Sea, towards the north and north-west, are broken scarps of white rock, probably of the same kind as the hill on which you stand, showing numerous pyramid-like peaks and short ridges, at least 14 or 15 miles distant. These cliff-like forms are continued round to the north-east, but in this direction are apparently not only higher but much further away, being apparently 25 or 30 miles distant, and forming a terminal scarp to the southern extremity of Negeb or the South Country. The most conspicuous object is Jebel Baredj, bearing about W.N.W. With a glass several hard horizontal bands could be seen standing out, forming small scarps intermediate between the peaks of its conical summit and the sloping talus below.

In a direct line south from this mountain there is a north-and-

south section, showing an anticlinal of limestone dipping at a high angle to the N.W., and to the S.E. being completely turned over.

After passing Bir el Kureis (a large artificially formed well, holding a continuous supply of water for the use of the Hadj pilgrims, which is sunk in the bed of a shallow wady of the same name), the road gradually ascends, through the range forming the southern continuation of Jebel Baredj, into Wady Dritt. Here the low scarps which bound either side of this low valley, exhibit an extremely fine-grained white carbonate of lime, in texture much superior to the bulk of our English chalk.

From Wady Dritt to Nakhl, the halfway station between Akaba and Suez, the country, which gently descends, is generally flat, the even contour being broken only by a few white scarps upon the right and left, and some shallow wadies which cross the road at right angles. These wadies of the desert are shallow, basin-like trenches, which, although they mark the line of drainage by the few bushes they contain, are very different from the well-defined river-like wadies seen amongst the mountains.

A few miles on the Akaba side of Nakhl there are several small but bold hills of chalk, the most conspicuous of which is Jebel al Kheimatein or the "two tents," so called from its shape. The road near this mountain is crossed by several veins of crystallised carbonate of lime about 6 inches in thickness, which, being more durable than the chalk through which they pass, stand up in bold ridges.

Nakhl to Suez.—From Nakhl the road towards Suez gently rises about 150 feet through a gap in the summit of the range of hills, which are seen to run like a line of white chalk cliffs from west to north. From this point a day and a half is spent in crossing a wide and open shingly plain traversed by a few north-and-south shallow wadies, until Wady Hawawiet, descending from Jebel Hutan, is reached.

On the south side of the entrance to the wady there are horizontal bands of limestone projecting through slopes of *débris*, about 350 or 400 feet above the surrounding level. The rock has here lost its chalk-like appearance, and is a compact limestone. Near the foot of the wady many *Ostreæ* and other fossil forms are observed; and at about 300 feet above the plain there are bands almost wholly made up of a small *Echinus*, varying in diameter from $\frac{3}{4}$ inch to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch. At about 350 feet the summit of the pass is reached, from which point there is an almost continuous descent towards Suez, the rocks dipping about 15° to the S.S.W. Mr. Etheridge considers that these bands are probably of Miocene age.

Whilst descending on the Suez side of the hills down Wady Sagarah, the *Echinus*-bed is again passed. In places the lime-

stone, which contains irregular concretions of flinty matter, is of a deep red colour, which is due to oxide of iron.

At Ras el Gibal this wady opens out into a small and fertile plain cultivated by the Beduins, on the south-west side of which there are ranges of white rock which appear to be Nummulitic. After leaving this plain, the whole of the way to Suez is covered with hills of drift sand.

Conclusion.—On account of the hurried nature of my journey, it would not be advisable to make any definite statement as to the identification of the geological horizons which were passed over; but it will be seen that, on lithological and scanty palæontological evidence, the series of rocks mentioned in the foregoing account will bear comparison with the succession summarised by Mr. Bauerman as occurring further to the south (Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc. for 1869, vol. xxv. p. 17).

The few fossils collected are at present in the hands of Mr. Henry Woodward, F.R.S., of the British Museum, who has kindly undertaken to examine them.

With regard to the crystalline rocks, it will be seen that the prevailing feature in them is the predominance of the felspathic element in the granites and in the dykes by which they are traversed.

It will also be seen that out of the seventy-seven specimens examined, only two approximated to a syenite; nor were there any massive hornblendic rocks of this description seen in the district visited. In the Journal of the Royal Dublin Society for January 1858, there is a communication on a "Mineralogical Excursion from Cairo into Arabia Petræa," edited by Professor Haughton. Accompanying this there is a collection of rocks verifying the observations, from which it would seem that although syenite does exist in the Sinaitic Peninsula, it does not form a predominant feature; and it is also stated that "all the mountains in the neighbourhood of [the traditional] Sinai are granite." Such being the case, it seems hardly justifiable to attempt an alteration in the name of the rock, although syenite is not found at Syene on the Nile.

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B.

Controversy on the late Dr. Beke's Discovery of the True Mount Sinai in Arabia.

My lamented husband arrived at Hastings on the morning of March 19, 1874, after an absence of three months and eleven days, during which period he performed his memorable expedition, at the age of seventy-four, in search of the true Mount Sinai, with what result has already been shown in the previous pages.

In order, however, that the public may be able to form a fair and unprejudiced opinion as to the value of Dr. Beke's discovery, and to come to some definite conclusion on the whole subject, I deem it right to place on record the controversy which took place in the public journals at the time.

In submitting this correspondence to my readers, I would ask them to bear in mind that the three first chapters of this work were written by Dr. Beke *after* the controversy was brought to a close, and that, therefore, they are the result of an impartial consideration of the whole subject.

Telegram published in the "Echo," 17th February 1874.

[The following was communicated to Reuter's Telegram Company by the Eastern Telegraph Company]:—

"Cairo, *February* 16.—Dr. Beke, the English traveller, reports from the Gulf of Akaba that he has found the true Mount Sinai, one day's journey north-east of Akaba. It is called by the Arabs Jebel-el-Nur, or Mountain of Light. Its height is 5000 feet. On the summit Dr. Beke found the remains of sacrificed animals, and lower down some Sinaitic inscriptions, which he copied."

Mrs. Beke to the Editor of the "Times," published 19th February 1874.

"In answer to the very numerous kind inquiries which have been addressed to me respecting Dr. Beke, I hope you will, with your usual courtesy, permit me, through the medium of your valuable columns, to offer my sincere thanks for these expressions of sympathy

in my anxiety, which has been roused by my not having received any news of my husband since he left Suez for Akaba in the Khédive's steamer 'Erin;' and, further, for the satisfaction of many of your readers who are kindly interested in the success of his important expedition, you will, I am sure, readily give publicity to the following telegram which I am rejoiced to say I have received this morning only [18th February] from Dr. Beke, dated 'Suez, 16th inst.:'—'Arrived safely. All well. I have succeeded in discovering the true Mount Sinai beyond Akaba, and have ascended to the summit. It is a mountain called by the Arabs 'Jebel-en-Nûr,' or 'Mountain of Light,' on which the Arabs say 'God spoke to Moses,' and therefore they stop and pray towards it. I start directly for Cairo. The steamer 'Erin,' that the Khédive kindly lent me, has not yet returned!'

"The delay in the delivery of my telegram is unaccountable, especially as I see in the 'Times' of this day a Reuter's telegram of the same date from 'Cairo.' My husband's arrival in England may now be confidently looked for during the first week in March. Thanking you very much for inserting this letter, I have," &c.

Dr. Beke to the Editor of the "Times" (16th February), published 27th February 1874.

"On the 28th of January I wrote from Akaba announcing the discovery of 'Moses' Place of Prayer' at Madian, on the east coast of the Gulf of Akaba, which I identify with the 'Encampment by the Red Sea' of Numbers xxxiii. 10. This letter was forwarded by the 'Erin' on her return voyage from Akaba; but in consequence of the severe weather she was exposed to, she had to put in at Tor, whence she may be expected to arrive here in a day or two.

"I am now thankful to be able to report that the object of my expedition to discover the true Mount Sinai has happily been attained, very much sooner than I could have anticipated, although not altogether in the manner I had expected.

"As stated in my former letter, we reached Akaba in the steamer 'Erin' on the 27th January.

"We left Akaba under the personal escort of Sheikh Mahommed ibn Ijât, the chief of the Aluwin tribe of Beduins, to whom I was the bearer of a *firman* from His Highness the Khédive of Egypt, and proceeded north-eastward up the Wady el-Ithem (the 'Etham' of the Exodus), and encamped in the evening at the foot of Mount Bághir, one of the principal masses of the chain of mountains bounding the valley of the Arabah on the east, which are marked in our maps as the Mountains of Shera, but of which the correct designation is the Mountains of Shafeh; those of Shera,

as I have myself seen, being a chain extending from that of Shafeh in the direction from north-west to south-east.

"My astonishment and gratification may be better imagined than described when I learnt that this Mount Bághir is the same as a mysterious Jebel-e'-Nūr, or 'Mountain of Light,' of which I had heard vaguely in Egypt as being that whereon the Almighty spoke with Moses, and which, from its position and other circumstances, is without doubt the Sinai of Scripture; although, from its manifest physical character, it appears that my favourite hypothesis that Mount Sinai was a volcano must be abandoned as untenable.

"We encamped at the foot of the 'Mountain of Light,' and during the ensuing night we experienced a most tremendous storm, the thunder and lightning being truly terrific, some of the claps being directly over our heads. The rain fell in torrents during several hours, threatening to wash us away altogether. I do not remember to have ever witnessed a more violent tempest either in Abyssinia or elsewhere; and its effect on my mind was this—that if the words of Scripture that at the time of the Delivery of the Law on Sinai 'the mountain burned with fire into the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness' (Deut. iv. 11), with other texts which I need not here refer to, are not, as would now appear, to be understood as descriptive of a volcanic eruption, still less can they be held to describe a mere thunderstorm, however violent, as is generally but somewhat inconsiderately imagined.

"As the climbing part of my expedition necessarily devolved on my young companion, Mr. Milne, he, on the following morning, ascended the mountain on Sheikh Mahommed's horse, and accompanied by the Sheikh's son and an attendant, also mounted, and by three Beduins on foot. On his return, shortly after four o'clock in the afternoon, he made me a most valuable and interesting report, of which I now gladly publish a few heads.

"The way was at first up a narrow wady, which grows more and more narrow till it becomes a gorge. On the road they passed a stone on which some inscriptions appear to have been cut, but which are now all defaced with the exception of the words 'Ya Allah' ('O God'), in Cufic, or old Arabic characters. Within the gorge itself they stopped to inspect another large stone, about four feet long and two feet square, made of granite. It originally stood upright, about two or three feet away from the side of the gorge, on another stone, which served as a pedestal; but it has now fallen over, and rests between its pedestal and the side of the gorge. Near the stone the Beduins come to pray; and, according to the statement of Sheikh Mahommed, who had heard it from his father, and he from his father, and so on, Sidi Ali ibn 'Elim, a noted Mahommedan saint, whose tomb and mosque are between Jaffa and Haifa, came

here also to perform his devotions. What led him to do so my informant could not say, unless he was commanded by Allah.

"On reaching the gorge, the riders had to leave their horses with two of the Arabs, and perform the rest of the ascent on foot. A short way up they came to a low wall across the gorge, which latter is filled with large boulders; and close above the wall, on the right hand, is a well about three feet in diameter and about the same to the surface of the water, which may be two feet deep. From this point the ascent was a 'climb,' the face of the rock being almost perpendicular.

"On the ridge on the left side of the gorge, about 150 yards distant from the well, is a pile of large rounded boulders of granite, consisting of four stones of the material of the mountain, three standing up facing the north and one at the back to the south, and on all of them are cut inscriptions, which Mr. Milne copied as well as his cold fingers would allow him to do so. The stones, which are much weather-worn, are externally of a dark-brown colour, against which the inscriptions make themselves visible from their being of a somewhat lighter colour. The lines of these 'Sinaitic inscriptions' are about three-quarters of an inch broad and very shallow, being not more than an eighth of an inch deep. The figures on the stones are very rude, and can hardly be phonetic; neither is it easy to say what they are intended to represent.

"On the very summit of the mountain they found numerous sheep skulls and horns, with a few bones, it being the custom of the Beduins to come up here to pray and to sacrifice a lamb, which is eaten on the spot; but none of the remains appear to be very recent. It is here, as I was told, that the Almighty is said to have spoken with Moses.

"Before reaching the summit, snow was found in the crevices of the mountain, and while Mr. Milne was at the top it hailed and snowed, and was so bitterly cold that it was as much as he could do to take a few angles with the azimuth compass, and even this he could not have done had not his attendants kindled a fire by which he might warm his fingers. The elevation of the spot is estimated at 5000 feet, but it will be known more accurately when our observations on the journey come to be calculated. Though so far distant, Akaba seemed just under his feet, but on so diminutive a scale that he failed to detect the castle among the date-palm trees, the general outline of which alone was visible. In other directions the landscape was blocked out by banks of cloud, fog and rain.

"Mount Bághir—the Mountain of Light—is one of the loftiest peaks of the range of mountains on the east side of the Wady-el-Arabah and the west side of the Wady-el-Ithem, overhanging the latter.

"Without dwelling on the geological features of the mountain, of which Mr. John Milne's report will treat very fully in my book, it will be sufficient to say here that it consists of a mass of pink or reddish granite, which, in places where it is weathered, assumes a dark-brown hue, and that the granite is traversed by numerous dykes, generally of a dark-green colour, and apparently dioretic.

"On the side of the mountain are many large boulders, several of which are so much decomposed on their under sides as to form small caverns. One of these was as much as 20 feet, or thereabouts, each way across, with a height of 10 feet or 12 feet at the entrance, sloping down towards the back. As the existence of a cave or caves on Mount Sinai is essential in order to meet the requirements of the texts, Exodus xxxiii. 22, and 1 Kings xix. 9, the fact that such caves do actually exist on the Mountain of Light is most pertinent and important.

"Not less significant is the fact that this majestic mountain is visible in all directions, and that round its base towards the east and south there is camping-ground for hundreds of thousands of persons.

"It would be out of place to dwell here on the importance of this discovery of the Mountain of Light as regards the elucidation of the Sacred History. Its identification with the mountain on which the Law was delivered is scarcely open to a doubt. I had imagined that mountain to be a volcano. I have publicly declared my conviction that such must be the fact, and the journey from which I am now returning was undertaken with the express object of establishing this assumed fact. I am now bound to admit that this discovery, though in strict accordance with the principles enunciated in my 'Origines Biblicæ' forty years ago, proves me to have been egregiously mistaken with respect to the volcanic character of Mount Sinai. I make this admission without any reservation, because my desire is, as it always has been, to adduce evidence of the historical truth of the Scripture narrative of the Exodus, in contradiction to the erroneous interpretation put upon that narrative which has caused its truth to be called in question; and I should be a traitor to the cause I have so much at heart were I to attempt to bolster up my own opinions when found to be unsupported by facts. 'Great is truth, and mighty above all things.'"

"*The Standard*," 28*th February* 1874.

"If unlimited self-confidence on the part of a discoverer could inspire the public with a general belief in his theories, there would be no doubt whatever about the discovery of the true Mount Sinai by Dr. Beke. But Dr. Beke's very manly and

straightforward letter on the subject supplies us with reasons for doubting his conclusions. Says he—'I had imagined that mountain to be a volcano. I have publicly declared my conviction that such must be the fact, and the journey from which I am now returning was undertaken with the express object of establishing this assumed fact. I am now bound to admit that this discovery, though in strict accordance with the principles enunciated in my 'Origines Biblicæ' forty years ago, proves me to have been egregiously mistaken with respect to the volcanic character of Mount Sinai. I make this admission without any reservation, because my desire is, as it always has been, to adduce evidence of the historical truth of the Scripture narrative of the Exodus, in contradiction to the erroneous interpretation put upon that narrative which has caused its truth to be called in question.' Of the honesty of this recantation there can be no manner of doubt, but when he tells us that the identification of the 'Mountain of Light' with the mountain on which the Law was delivered is 'scarcely open to doubt,' he is liable to be awkwardly confronted with the fact that he was formerly just as convinced that the mountain 'must have been' a volcano. Unless he can bring more proofs than his letter indicates, the most that can be said to be shown is, that there is no insuperable obstacle to the reception of his theory."

The "True Mount Sinai," published in the "Standard," 28th February 1874.

"The 'Daily News' says:—The 'discovery of the true Mount Sinai by Dr. Beke, as announced by himself, may disquiet the minds of a good many people who have been accustomed to regard the question as finally and comfortably settled.' They may reassure themselves. Dr. Beke's discovery amounts in reality to very little. He has found in that little-known country east of the Gulf of Akaba, which he, almost alone among men, regards as the scene of the forty years' wandering, a hill called the Mountain of Light, which is regarded by the natives of the place as that on which the Law was given. There were already two other mountains to which the same tradition attaches, just as there are two islands on which St. Paul was wrecked; so that what Dr. Beke has actually discovered is only a third traditional site. It has long been regarded as a canon in criticism that all Arabic traditions should be regarded with suspicion, and especially those which relate to Moses and Pharaoh.

"What remains for Dr. Beke to do is to adjust his site to the details of history. It will be strange indeed if there turn out to be two places, each of which exactly fulfils in its surroundings, as

well as in itself, the required conditions, these being at once minute and clear. Until this has been done, and not before, we may begin to reconsider the established geography."

The Rev. F. W. Holland to the Editor of the "Times," published 3d March 1874.

"I was not aware till to-day that Dr. Beke had done me the honour to make special mention of me in a pamphlet which he published before he started for the East, as his 'opponent.' But, since he has done so, will you allow me to state that his discovery of Jebel-en-Nar has not in the least shaken my faith in Jebel Mûsa as the true Mount Sinai, and that I am quite ready to bring forward arguments to disprove his theory? But it would be neither fair nor wise to attempt to do so until I know further particulars of his discoveries than his short telegram conveys."

Major C. W. Wilson, R.E., to the Editor of the "Times," published 3d March 1874.

"When Dr. Beke left England last year with the avowed intention of finding Mount Sinai in the vicinity of Akaba, it was not to be expected that he would return empty-handed, and I presume few of your readers were taken by surprise when publicity was given to his discovery in the rather sensational telegram from Suez which appeared in your columns of the 18th. I had not intended raising a discussion on the result of Dr. Beke's journey until his return to this country, nor do I wish to do so now; your paper is hardly a fitting place for a long discussion which must necessarily enter into many minute details, and I will only say now that the members of the late Ordnance Survey of Sinai are fully prepared to maintain the opinion they have expressed as to the position of Mount Sinai in the peninsula of the same name. All the conditions required by the Bible narrative are fully met by the identification of Mount Sinai with the well-known Ras Sufsafeh, while it remains to be seen whether Dr. Beke can say the same of his new discovery; he has still to prove his case, but every one must be glad that he has abandoned his 'fire and smoke' theory, and I must do him full justice for the frank manner in which he has cast it to the winds.

"In his letter published on Friday morning Dr. Beke attaches undue importance to the presence of sacrificial remains, a tradition relating to Moses, and the existence of Sinaitic inscriptions: had he known the country a little better, he would have been aware that from Ras Muhammed to Petra there are scarcely twenty square miles

in which a place of sacrifice and tradition of Moses cannot be found; and as to Sinaitic inscriptions, they are sown broadcast over the country. I will only add that I have the greatest admiration for the energy and faith which led the veteran explorer to go one day's journey into the wilderness and find Mount Sinai, and only regret that he had not leisure to complete his tour by a visit to the rival mountain in the Peninsula."

Dr. Beke to the Editor of the "Times," dated Akaba, 28th January, and Mrs. Beke to the Editor of the "Times," published 5th March 1874.

"In Dr. Beke's letter from Suez of the 16th ultimo, which you kindly published in the 'Times' of the 27th ultimo, by which he announced his discovery of the 'true Mount Sinai,' he mentioned that he had written to you on the 28th of January from Akaba, describing 'Moses place of prayer' at Madiān, on the east coast of the Gulf of Akaba, which also he has been so fortunate as to discover. On his return to Egypt, Dr. Beke found that the little steamer 'Erin' had not returned to Suez, she having been delayed by stress of weather and want of coals, so that his letter to you of the 28th of January, which he intrusted to the captain, has only now reached me, and I hasten to forward it to you for publication:—

"'Sir,—His Highness the Khédive having been pleased to place the Egyptian steamer 'Erin' at my disposal for the conveyance of myself and party to the head of the Gulf of Akaba, we left Suez in that vessel on the morning of January 18th, and arrived here in safety in the afternoon of yesterday, the 27th, after a pleasant, and, from my point of view, most interesting and successful voyage of ten days.

"'The run down the Gulf of Suez was without the occurrence of anything of moment, but on our passing Ras Mohammed—the southern extremity of the Peninsula of Tor, the traditional 'Mount Sinai'—we encountered the northerly winds, almost constantly blowing down the Gulf of Akaba, which during three days and more raged with great violence. Fortunately I was desirous of visiting Aiyúnah, Burckhardt's Ayoun el Kassab, the Hadj station on the sea-shore a little way east of the entrance of the Gulf, which I imagined to be the 'Encampment by the Red Sea' of the Israelites, mentioned in Numbers xxxiii. 10; and by going thither we escaped the violence of the storm; otherwise I fear it might have fared badly with our frail bark of only sixty-four tons.

"'On our return into the Gulf, as the tempest had not entirely

abated, we anchored on the 24th close to the shore at Magna or Madian, in 28° 23′ N. lat., behind a point of land and a reef, which, though not a fit anchorage for a large vessel, afforded shelter to the little 'Erin,' though we lost here one of our anchors. At Madian we had to remain a day, which afforded us an opportunity of going on shore and inspecting the place, a camping-ground of the Beni Ughba Arabs, numbering about 400 souls. The Sheikh, with the main body of the tribe, was away in the interior, a few persons only remaining here to attend to the fructification of their numerous date palms—it is no exaggeration to estimate them at 1000 or more—growing near the beach and along a valley coming from the east, in which there is a perennial stream of water. With the date trees we saw also several dōm palms, lime, nebbuk, and fig trees; and there were even a few patches of barley carefully protected by hedges of palm leaves.

"'We were on the point of returning to the ship, when we were informed of the existence in the vicinity of a holy spot, where it is said the Prophet Moses prayed, and over which a 'mosque' had been erected. This was stated to be at one hour's distance from the shore; and as with these people's vague estimate of distances, it might possibly be much more, and I did not feel myself competent to go so far on foot, we went on board to lunch, after which Mr. Milne returned on shore, and walked inland with a servant and a native guide.

"'He proceeded eastward up the valley, along the side of the palm grove, gradually ascending over a sandstone slope, in places worn into hummocks by the water, which during the rainy season finds its way down to the sea, and when about half a mile from the coast he came to a small stream some three feet wide, running in a channel which it has cut in the solid rock. At the point where he struck the stream the water runs prettily over the inclined but irregular surface of the rock, with a fall, or succession of falls, of about twelve feet in all, winding and losing itself among the palm trees. The surface of the rock, which is sandstone, in places merging into a conglomerate of granite, diorite, and quartz, in stones, some as large as cocoa-nuts, cemented by coarse sand, is here quite clear, so that one walks upon the bare rock; but at a couple of hundred yards further up the valley the rock is covered with sand, which appears to be making rapid inroads. So great, indeed, is its encroachment on the date plantations that the Arabs have made hedges round these to protect them from the sand, which hedges, however, are being overwhelmed, and others have, consequently, to be erected further in.

"'On reaching the end of the palm groves, a mound is seen half as high as the tops of the trees, with numerous blocks of white stone

lying among the sand, and beyond this there is a good view further up the valley, along which date palms are seen growing in patches. There are also a few dōm palms, one noticeable one overhanging the white stones.

"'These remains, which, instead of being an hour's journey or more from the sea, are at the utmost one mile from the beach, were found on examination to consist of blocks of alabaster, so white and pure as at first sight to be mistaken for marble, and only proved to be sulphate of lime by its scratching with a knife and by its non-effervescence with muriatic acid. The blocks are each about three feet long and one foot six inches square, and appear to have been worked with the tool, though the edges are now much rounded by the weather. One of them seems to form a portion of a column. Together with the blocks of alabaster are some of granite, likewise much weathered. As far as a brief and hasty inspection would allow an opinion to be formed, these stones appear to lie in two parallelograms, ranging from north to south, the one within the other, the south end of the inner one being semicircular, and there even seem to be indications of a third range of stones further to the north. But it is difficult to speak with certainty on account of the sand which covers these stones in part and threatens soon to hide them entirely. There are several mounds of sand round about, which may probably contain other remains.

"'This most interesting spot, which requires to be more closely examined, is especially important to me, because I now see that here, at Madian, and not at Ayúnah, must have been the 'Encampment by the Red Sea' of the Israelites. Its proximity (half a day's journey) to Maghara Sho'eib, or Jethro's Cave, which I identify with the Elim of the Exodus, and the fact that the stream of running water must have some of its sources at or near that spot, explain why it should not have been mentioned in Exodus xv. 27, xvi. 1, as a separate station, much more satisfactorily than I attempted in page 38 of my pamphlet, *Mount Sinai a Volcano*, to explain the apparent discrepancy in the two statements of Scripture. The 'Encampment by the Red Sea' was simply a continuation of that at Elim, with its 'twelve wells of water and threescore and ten palm trees,' the two together stretching down the valley, with its living water, from Maghara Sho'eib, or 'Jethro's Cave,' to this 'Praying-place of Moses' at Madian.

"'As one of my main arguments against the correctness of the vulgar indentification of Mount Sinai and other places connected with the Exodus of the Israelites is based on the insufficiency of local traditions to establish the authenticity of any such identifications, it would be inconsistent on my part were I to insist on the intrinsic and absolute value of the traditions attached to 'Jethro's

Cave,' 'Moses' Praying-place,' &c. Nevertheless these traditions are, at the least, as valuable as any of the others, and their existence here on the distant and almost unknown shores of the Gulf of Akaba, as well as that of 'Pharaoh's Island,' within sight from where I am now writing, and 'Wady Ithem,' the entrance to the desert of Nedjid, which I identify with 'Etham in the edge of the wilderness' of Exodus xiii. 20, within two hours' journey from this spot, all serve to show that there is sufficient reason for my hypothesis that this, the Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, is the Red Sea through which the Israelites passed in the flight from Pharaoh king of Mitzraim. A few days more will, I trust, suffice to demonstrate the absolute truth of this hypothesis.—I am, sir, your very obedient servant,

CHARLES BEKE.

"'*Akaba, January 28th.*'

"In your impression of to-day I see a letter from Mr. F. W. Holland, and one from our friend Major Wilson. The former gentleman, although he says he is quite ready to bring forth arguments to disprove Dr. Beke's theory, very rightly and kindly adds that it would be neither fair nor wise to attempt to do so until he knows further particulars of Dr. Beke's discoveries. Major Wilson also says, 'I had not intended raising a discussion on the result of Dr. Beke's journey until his return to this country, nor do I wish to do so now.'

"I trust I may be pardoned for remarking that the contents of the Major's letter can scarcely be said to be in accordance with the intention this expressed.

"Dr. Beke will, I trust, be home in the course of a fortnight, and in the meantime I venture to ask the public to withhold their judgment until he arrives with the proofs which I am persuaded he will bring with him of his discovery of the true Mount Sinai. I ask this because I am, like Major Wilson, delighted to see that my husband does not intend his discovery of the true Mount Sinai to end in smoke, but in truth.

"In Dr. Beke's letter to me from Akaba, he tells me he is deeply indebted to the 'patriotic and obliging' spirit of the Peninsular and Oriental Company for their kindness in supplying his little steamer 'Erin' with the British flag, and for every assistance in his preparations for his journey from Suez.

"I learn that Colonel Gordon left Cairo for Gondokoro on the 20th of last month, with the intention of proceeding as quickly as possible as far as the Albert Nyanza, and, with his Bible for his companion and guide, to succeed, or to leave, if necessary, his bones in Africa!"

Major H. S. Palmer, R.E., to the Editor of the "Times," published 7th March.

"I fully concur with Major Wilson and Mr. Holland, my late colleagues on the Sinai Survey, in their remarks in the 'Times' of yesterday on Dr. Beke's alleged discovery of 'the true Mount Sinai.'

"In Dr. Beke's recently published work he confessed himself content to stake his 'reputation as a scholar and a traveller of some experience' on the hypothesis that Mount Sinai was an extinct volcano in the Arabian desert east of the Ghor. Having now, to the surprise of no one, abandoned this hypothesis, after but one day's march in the desert, and acknowledged himself 'egregiously mistaken,' he cannot expect his reputation any longer to stand him in much stead; for his new theory he will have to rely only upon arguments and facts.

"It may be well to remind him that he will need, in the first place, to disprove the conclusions to which not alone the late Ordnance Survey party have come, but the great majority of travellers, both ancient and modern, among our own countrymen, as well as foreigners; and that then, having so far cleared his ground, he must produce very different reasons in favour of the new mountain from those which appeared in his letter from Suez in the 'Times' of the 27th ultimo, or in anything we have yet seen from i m.

"In the meantime the public will withhold their judgment."

Professor E. H. Palmer to the "Academy," published 7th March.

"Dr. Beke's sensational announcement by telegraph of the 'discovery of the true Mount Sinai' may have startled some people into acquiescence in his theory, but I can scarcely believe that any one who has really considered the question can have regarded the 'discovery' *au sérieux*. Still, an assertion so positively and unequivocally made seemed to imply some cogent and decisive arguments in the background; and I must confess that I looked forward with some interest to the further detailed explanations promised by the learned traveller. These have at length appeared in his letter to the 'Times' of February 27, but, strange to say, we, the advocates of Jebel Músa, the old orthodox Sinai, do not feel ourselves so utterly annihilated as we perhaps ought to do. It would be unjust to attack Dr. Beke's theories before he is himself upon the spot to state his case and answer our arguments; but while I am, like my fellow-travellers, willing to wait until that time, I cannot let such an assertion pass

entirely unchallenged. Dr. Beke starts with the assumption that Mount Sinai is a volcano, and is situated to the east of the Ghor, instead of to the west of the Gulf of 'Akaba. Arrived at 'Akaba, he selects the first prominent mountain to which some traditional sanctity appears to attach, and at once adopts it as his Sinai, with the statement that 'its identification with the mountain on which the Law was delivered is scarcely open to a doubt.' It is not a volcano, it is true, but on that point the Doctor naïvely owns that he was 'egregiously mistaken.' The reasons which carried this conviction to his mind are strangely inadequate. They are: 1. That he had heard the mountain in question 'vaguely spoken of in Egypt as being that whereon the Almighty spake with Moses;' 2. That there are traces of sacrificial remains on the summit; 3. That 'Sinaitic inscriptions' are found there. He appears also to attach considerable importance to the alternative name of the mountain—Jebel-en-Núr.

"Now, as Major Wilson has pointed out in his letter to the 'Times' of the 3d instant, the country on either side of the Gulf of 'Akaba absolutely teems with traditions of Moses, the name of the lawgiver being associated with nearly every striking natural phenomenon which occurs. With regard to the sacrificial remains, there is scarcely a 'high place' in the desert where the Bedawín do *not* offer up sacrifices. As for the 'Sinaitic inscriptions,' those which have hitherto reached the hands of European scholars are either in Nabathean or Greek, and in no case of an earlier date than the first few centuries of the Christian era. These again are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the desert. However, until Mr. Milne's copies are brought home, it would be premature to pronounce upon them. The name 'the Mountain of Light' surely points rather to Sabæanism than Mosaism, and would in that case satisfactorily account for the sacrifices. So much, then, for the importance of these alleged proofs of identification; but Dr. Beke says that 'from its position and other circumstances the mountain is undoubtedly the Sinai of Scripture.' It is here that the crucial test of the soundness of the theory may be applied; for one of two things must be assumed —either that the sacred penman gave an incomplete account of the itinerary of the Israelites, for some half dozen or more stations must be added to the lists in Exodus and Numbers to take them to a Sinai situated within a day's journey of 'Akaba; or else the hitherto unquestioned identification of the Egypt of the Pharaohs with the Mitzraim of the Bible must be abandoned. This latter view has been more than once advocated in the face of the testimony of history and of hieroglyphic monuments, and of the entire absence of any trace of such civilisation as that mentioned in the Bible narrative of the Exodus east of the Nile valley.

"Here, then, is the initial difficulty. If we can believe the inspired writer ignorant of the number of stations between Egypt and Sinai, or if we can believe in a second Egypt east of the Isthmus of Suez which has passed away without leaving a trace of its existence behind, then we may reject the traditions of ages, local and historical, the evidence of physical facts, as reported by the Ordnance Survey and a long series of travellers, in favour of the mere hypothesis of a gentleman who acknowledges himself to be 'egregiously mistaken' upon the main point which he undertook his journey to prove.

"In the meantime, I feel sure that the public will at least suspend its judgment until Dr. Beke's return has given the supporters of the traditional Sinai an opportunity of hearing and discussing his arguments *in extenso*."

N.B.—Dr. Beke's reply to the foregoing letter was duly forwarded to the Editor of the "Academy;" but was refused insertion, in spite of Dr. Beke's urgent remonstrance with the Editor against the unfairness of allowing such a letter to appear in its columns, and not the reply.

A. G. P.[1] *to the Editor of the "Standard," 7th March, published 12th March.*

"The opposition shown in the present day to Scripture, not only in the efforts made to abolish it altogether from our schools, but in the attempts made to explain away its truths, may possibly throw some light upon the above controversy. Dr. Beke, some time back, staked his reputation, as a scholar and a traveller of some experience, on the fact that the real Mount Sinai was an extinct volcano. On comparing this preconceived notion with the account in Exodus, the animus is apparent. 'There were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the Mount, . . . and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly.' According to Dr. Beke's recent letter, however, his volcano theory has failed, and he now appears jubilant over a thunderstorm theory. Are we wrong in classing as 'oppositions of science, falsely so called,' these attempts to explain away all that is miraculous in that book which is handed down by the nation whose very existence is itself a standing miracle?"

Mr. J. N. Lee to the Editor of the "Standard," published 14th March.

"'A. G. P.' has unwittingly misrepresented Dr. Beke on the subject of the thunderstorm. I subjoin Dr. Beke's own words:—

[1] Supposed to be Captain H. S. Palmer.

"'We encamped at the foot of the 'Mountain of Light,' and during the ensuing night we experienced a most tremendous storm, the thunder and lightning being truly terrific, some of the claps being directly over our heads. The rain fell in torrents during several hours, threatening to wash us away altogether. I do not remember to have ever witnessed a more violent tempest either in Abyssinia or elsewhere; and its effect on my mind was this—that if the words of Scripture, that at the time of the Delivery of the Law on Sinai, 'the mountain burned with fire into the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds and thick darkness' (Deut. iv. 11), with other texts which I need not here refer to, are not, as would now appear, to be understood as descriptive of a volcanic eruption, still less can they be held to describe a mere thunderstorm, however violent, as is generally but somewhat inconsiderately imagined.'"

On the Exodus of the Israelites.

Dr. Beke to the "Athenæum," published 28th March 1874.

"On my return to England from the visit I have just made to the 'Mountain of Light,' situate north-east of 'Akaba, which I deem to be the true Mount Sinai, I wish to say a few words respecting the flight of the children of Israel from Rameses to the Red Sea, as recorded in Exodus xii. 37, xiii. 20, xiv. 1, which is generally imagined to have occupied them only three days, because 'the journeys of the Israelites,' enumerated in the thirty-third chapter of Numbers, are assumed to be each of a single day only.

"The fact is, however, that the Scripture says nothing whatever about days' journey, but simply records the names of the principal places through or by which the Israelites passed. To conclude that the distance from Rameses to the Red Sea is only three days' journey, because the intermediate stations of Succoth and Etham alone are named, is much the same as if it were argued that the journey I have just gone from Alexandria to Venice, from Venice to Paris, and from Paris to England, has been of only three days' duration, because no mention is made of any of its intermediate stages.

"That the journey of the Israelites from Rameses to the Red Sea was in reality of six days' duration, and not of three days only, is established by the following simple argument. The days during which the people ate unleavened bread were seven, commencing on the fifteenth and ending on the twenty-first day of the month; the first day of the seven being a day of holy convocation or feast, and the seventh day being in like manner a day of holy convocation or feast (see Exod. xiii. 16; Levit. xxxiii. 7, 8). These days of unleavened bread were necessarily coincident with those of their flight,

which commenced at midnight of (preceding) the fifteenth day of the month, and continued till the night of (preceding) the twenty-first day of the month, when they passed through the Red Sea. They ate unleavened bread on the night of the feast of the Passover, because, as we are expressly told (Exod. xii. 34), their bread was not yet leavened, and they still continued to eat unleavened bread on the seventh day, although a feast, because during the preceding night their passage through the Red Sea took place, and there was neither time nor opportunity for them to leaven their bread.

"This construction of the Scripture narrative is so simple and natural that it scarcely stands in need of corroborative evidence. Nevertheless, that evidence is afforded by the fact that to the present day the Jews regard the twenty-first day of the month as the anniversary of the passage of their ancestors through the Red Sea, and accordingly on that day they recite in their synagogues the fifteenth chapter of Exodus, containing the magnificent song of triumph and thanksgiving sung by Moses and the Children of Israel. Besides which, it has to be remarked that, had the passage through the Red Sea taken place after only three days' journey, the Israelites would have been guilty of the inconsistency and even the absurdity of continuing to eat 'the bread of affliction,' as it is emphatically called in Deuteronomy xvi. 3, three days after their affliction had come to an end, and there was no longer any necessity for them to refrain from leavening their bread as they had been in the habit of doing.

"It is true that the Jews no longer regard their unleavened bread as the bread of affliction, but rather as the bread of rejoicing, and instead of keeping only the first and seventh days of unleavened bread as feasts or days of holy convocation, as is ordained in the Pentateuch, they keep the whole seven days as if they were feasts. This, however, is a variation of long standing; for in 2 Chron. xxx. 21, xxxiii. 17; Ezra iv. 22, we read that 'they kept the *feast* of unleavened bread seven days.' So easy, and indeed so natural, has it been with them, as with all other people, to change their holy days into holidays.

"The Feast of the Passover is now near at hand. If any of your readers desire to satisfy themselves as to the custom of the Jews in this respect, they have only to visit one of their synagogues on the twenty-first day of the month—the 8th of April, if I calculate rightly—when they will hear the fifteenth chapter of Exodus read, because that day is the anniversary of the passage of the Children of Israel through the Red Sea, and the destruction therein of Pharaoh and his host.

"Sufficient has been said, I trust, to show that the flight of the Israelites from Rameses to the Red Sea occupied them six days,

and not three days only as is generally imagined. And as that flight was a precipitous one, and taken in great part during the night by the light of the moon, between the full and the third quarter, it may reasonably be inferred that the distance travelled by the fugitives between Rameses and the Red Sea was much more than an ordinary six days' journey. Hence it is manifest how futile all attempts to trace the route of the Israelites must be, that are based on the assumption that that distance was of three days' journey only."

The True Mount Sinai.

Dr. Beke to the Editor of the "Times" on his arrival in England, published 30th March 1874.

"I have only, since I arrived in England, seen my friend Major Wilson's letter and those of the Rev. F. W. Holland and Major Palmer in the 'Times' of the 3d and 7th inst., and notwithstanding the time which has elapsed since the appearance of those letters, I rely on your impartiality and kindness to give equal publicity to my reply to them. Those gentlemen having all been connected with the recent Ordnance Survey of the Peninsula between the Gulf of Suez and Akaba, in which Mount Sinai is traditionally placed, are unwilling, not unnaturally, to have the faith in that traditional mountain shaken. But I feel persuaded that none of those gentlemen, like myself, desire otherwise than that the truth upon so important a Biblical question should be ascertained, and that, therefore, in the cause of that truth, they will readily lay aside the personal feelings they must so naturally entertain on the subject.

"As it appears to me, Major Palmer is begging the whole question when he says that I have 'in the first place, to disprove the conclusions to which not alone the late Ordnance Survey party have come, but the great majority of travellers, both ancient and modern, among our own countrymen, as well as foreigners.' Does that officer mean that questions like this are to be decided by a *plébiscite?* And are the 'conclusions' which I am thus called on to disprove anything but foregone conclusions? All that the Ordnance Surveying party were intended or professed to do was to 'explore the whole Peninsula,' and to 'estimate fairly the claims of the several rival Mounts Sinai' within that Peninsula, it being assumed by them that some one of those rivals must necessarily be the true Mountain of the Law. Of their having performed their task most ably and efficiently there can be no doubt whatever. It is only to be regretted that before undertaking a work of such magnitude, which, however admirably executed, is likely to prove

valueless as illustrative of the narrative of the Exodus, they should not have considered the previous question as to whether any one at all of those 'rival Mounts Sinai' could be the true one, and whether, indeed, the fact of such rivalry was not destructive of the tradition which places that mountain within the Peninsula.

"And, in the result, has the Ordnance Survey really effected its professed object? To say nothing of Um Shaumur and Jebel Katherin, have Mr. Holland and his companions disproved the pretensions of Jebel Serbal as advocated by Professor Lepsius, Mr. Bartlett, Dr. Stewart, and others, or of Jebel Sena with its suggestive name, on which Dean Stanley dwells? Are they even agreed among themselves as to which is the real Sinai? Mr. Holland has still 'faith in Jebel Musa,' although I was informed in Egypt (evidently in error) that his faith had of late been seriously shaken; while Major Wilson declares that 'all the conditions required by the Bible narrative are fully met by the identification of Mount Sinai with the well-known Ras Sufsafeh,' which, instead of being the Jebel Musa in which Mr. Holland has faith, is a separate peak further to the north.

"As far as I can judge—and I have heard the like opinion expressed by several well-informed persons—the result of the Ordnance Survey has been to unsettle things more than ever; so that the assertion of Mr. Holland in the 'Athenæum' of the 26th of September 1878, that 'all attempts to lay down the probable line of march of the Children of Israel are mere guesswork,' remains just as true to-day as it was when made five and a half years ago.

"The only issue out of the 'many difficulties which have perplexed earnest and anxious minds,' and the only sure way to 'solve questions which have thrown discredit upon the truth of a portion of the Bible history,' is to reopen the whole question and to consider impartially and reasonably the likely position of the Mountain of the Law upon the basis of my theory that the Yam-Suph or Red Sea, through which the Israelites passed in their Exodus is the same 'Red Sea in the land of Edom' (1 Kings ix. 26) that was navigated by the Israelitish and Tyrian fleets five centuries later—namely, the Gulf of Akaba, whence I have just returned, the Gulf of Suez having been as little known to Moses as it was to Solomon and Hiram.

"Though Major Palmer appears to be unacquainted with this theory of mine, inasmuch as he calls it 'new,' whereas it was enunciated forty years ago in my 'Origines Biblicæ,' it is nevertheless well known to Mr. Holland, who has combated it (though without naming me as its author), in his appendix to Major Wilson's work, the 'Recovery of Jerusalem,' saying that the Red Sea, where crossed by the Israelites, was distant only three days' journey from their

starting point, 'a distance,' he says, 'which exactly agrees with that of the head of the Gulf of Suez, but which does not agree at all with the distance of the head of the Gulf of Akaba.'

"But this supposed agreement is based upon the erroneous assumption that the Israelites were only three days on their journey to the Red Sea, whereas I have shown in my recently-published pamphlet ('Mount Sinai a Volcano') they were no less than six days on their march—their passage through the sea having been made during the night of (preceding) the seventh day of unleavened bread, and accordingly their descendants celebrate on that day the anniversary of that passage.

"The Ordnance Surveyors may be content to adopt the tradition of the monks of the convent on Jebel Musa, backed by the 'conclusions' to which Major Palmer refers. For my own part, I prefer the testimony of the Scripture History, in perfect unison with which is the unbroken tradition of the Israelitish people, who during the entire period of their national history have eaten during seven days what at the institution of the Passover was 'the bread of affliction,' but which after their deliverance became the bread of rejoicing, as it continues to be to this day. If any of your readers feel inclined to satisfy themselves as to the fact, they have only to enter a Jewish synagogue on the 21st day of the present month of Nissan, which will be (if I mistake not) on the 8th of April, and they will hear read the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Exodus, containing the magnificent song of Thanksgiving and Triumph sung by Moses and the Children of Israel after their safe passage through the Yam-Suph—the 'Red Sea in the Land of Edom' of 1 Kings ix. 26, as I have so long contended—and the destruction therein of Pharaoh and his host.

"As my friend Major Wilson justly observes, the 'Times' is hardly a fitting place for a long discussion of this sort. I will, therefore, merely remark that my present discovery of the 'Mountain of Light,' and my identification of it with the Mount Sinai of Scripture, is a fact which I confidently adduce as an additional proof of the correctness of the theory enunciated by me in 'Origines Biblicæ' in 1834, and since then supported by arguments and facts recorded in various publications, the last of these being my little work the 'Idol in Horeb,' published in 1871. While on this subject I may mention, as not without bearing on the general subject, that when at Cairo a few days ago I was informed by the chief of the little community of Samaritans at Nablous (Shechem), Yakúb Shelaby, who is well known to Dean Stanley, Dr. Pusey, the Rev. George Williams, and other travellers in the Holy Land, that he and his people consider the molten image made by Aaron for the children of Israel to worship (Exod. xxxii. 4), as well as the two

idols set up by Jeroboam in Bethel and Dan at the time of the secession of the Ten Tribes (1 Kings xii. 28), to have been simply unwrought lumps of gold; thus corroborating the opinion expressed in my last named work that 'the golden image at Mount Sinai was a cone and not a calf.'

"In conclusion it is necessary that I should correct an error which my friend Major Wilson appears to have fallen into when imagining me to have 'abandoned my fire and smoke theory,' and to have 'cast it to the winds.' The 'Mountain of Light'—my Mount Sinai—as I was told, derives its appellation from the light, which appeared at night on its summit and served as a guide to Moses and the Israelites in their flight; that is to say, the 'pillar of fire' by night and the 'pillar of cloud' by day, of Exodus xiii. 21. If this appearance was not volcanic—and an eminent scientific friend of mine contends that it was so even on the summit of the traditional Mount Sinai—it must have had its origin in some cause which is at present inexplicable, and which in vulgar parlance would be styled a miracle.

"It will thus be seen that the question between the Ordnance Surveyors and myself is of a very different character from what it would appear to be from their letters in the 'Times,' to which I trust I have now fully replied."

Letter from Major C. W. Wilson, R.E., to the Editor of the "Times," published 3d April.

"Would you allow me space to suggest to my friend Dr. Beke, that when he next addresses a long letter to the 'Times' criticising the views of other travellers he should make himself acquainted with the subject on which he writes?

"Your readers will probably be surprised to learn that Dr. Beke does not appear to have consulted the published account of the Ordnance Survey of Sinai before writing his letter. Had he done so he would have been aware that the members of the Surveying Expedition are perfectly agreed among themselves as to the position of Mount Sinai and the route followed by the Israelites in their journey to it; he would also have seen from those safe guides, maps, and photographs, as well as from the letterpress, that neither Serbal, Catherine, Umm Shomer, or Sena could have been the Mountain of the Law.

"I would venture to express a hope that, though Dr. Beke did not consider it worth his while to visit the Peninsula of Sinai, he may, before publishing the results of his journey in search of a volcano, take the trouble to read what has been written by those whose views he has criticised in the 'Times' of Monday morning.

"It would hardly be fair to make any remarks on Dr. Beke's peculiar theories until the appearance of his promised work, 'Sinai Regained;' meanwhile I may add that all the published documents connected with the Ordnance Survey are very much at his service, if he wishes to avail himself of them."

Letter from "One Who has Been There" to the Editor of the "Times," published 3d April.

"I have read—I cannot say with surprise, but with a certain amount of wonder—Dr. Beke's letter, published in the 'Times' of Monday morning, relative to his alleged discovery of the true Mount Sinai. Dr. Beke's theory may not be 'new' so far as he himself is concerned, for, as he says, it was published in an incomplete work issued a good many years ago; but it is quite new so far as the public is concerned, inasmuch as it attempts to upset the conclusions arrived at, and almost universally accepted, by ancient and modern authorities for hundreds of years.

"The fact is that Dr. Beke had a theory, and in order to establish that theory it was necessary to find a mountain—and this he has done, with the smallest amount of trouble to himself—within a few hours' journey of Akabah, the site of the ancient Ezion-geber.

"Now, to prove the utter absurdity of such a theory it is only necessary to state that the Sinai of the Israelites was the ninth station named in the wanderings of the children of Israel (see Numbers xxxiii.), and that Ezion-geber is the twenty-ninth; and to place 'the true Mount Sinai' within half a day's journey of the latter place would be to throw the whole itinerary into utter confusion. The reference given by Dr. Beke to 1 Kings ix. 26 is also entirely misleading; for any one can see for himself that this verse alludes exclusively to Ezion-geber, which was situated, as every one admits, on the eastern fork of the Red Sea—that is, on the Gulph of Akabah.

"But Dr. Beke has another theory, and that a still more astounding one—viz., that the Israelites never were in Egypt at all—that is, in the country known to us as Egypt, but in some undiscovered region lying to the eastward, where all the phenomena and peculiarities of the country known to us as Egypt, including a new river Nile, have to be reproduced if his theory be correct. It will require a vastly larger amount of persuasion to accept this idea as true than it needs of faith to believe in the story as we have hitherto received it, involving, as it does, the necessity of believing also that the Israelites themselves, who were the nearest neighbours of, and in closest intercourse with, the Egyptians did not know where they came from.

"The Jebel-en-Nur which Dr. Beke has 'discovered' is a large flat-topped mountain, visible to every one ascending or descending the pass leading from the plain of Akabah to the plateau of the Tih. The only real discovery he has made is in the name, and knowing, as all travellers do, the readiness with which all Orientals, and especially dragomans, adopt the slightest hint given to them by their employers, I cannot help suspecting that the name, like the theory, originated with the Doctor; at all events, it proves nothing, and I do not suppose that Dr. Beke means to affirm that the bones found on the top were left there by the Israelites.

"The country to the eastward of the spot which Dr. Beke reached, and to the mountain, which he did not ascend, is not unknown to us. It has been described, I think, by Burckhardt, and is, at all events, traversed only a short distance inland by the great Haj route from Damascus to Mecca and Medinah, so that if any region answering at all to the Egypt we know of had existed thereabouts, it is pretty certain that we should have heard of it before this. The existence of a second Nile could not have been kept a secret for so long a time. On the other hand, I think that on the question of time Dr. Beke may be right, and it is much more probable that the Israelites, encumbered as they were, took six days than three to reach the Red Sea; but, on the same showing, this Red Sea must be the Gulf of Suez and none other, for it is utterly impossible that they could have got to the Gulf of Akabah in that time. Hence the necessity of another Egypt.

"If Dr. Beke had ever been at the traditional Mount Sinai he would not have committed the error of describing Jebel Musa and Ras-el-Sufsafeh as two distinct mountains. The latter is simply one of the buttresses of the great mountain known as a whole as Jebel Musa, and any one who has stood on that wondrous cliff, as I have, and looked down on the great plain of Er Rahah stretched out at his feet, and rising gradually, as it recedes from the base, like the pit of a theatre, cannot fail, with the Bible narrative in his hands, to recognise it as the undoubted spot where the Israelitish encampment stood.

"As for the claims of Jebel Serbal, &c., Dr. Beke ought to know by this time that these have long since yielded to the unquestionable results of recent scientific investigation, and never had any other foundation than the fact that, like his Jebel-en-Nur, they were places of sacrifice and devotion."

Major H. S. Palmer, R.E., to the Editor of the "Times," published 3d April.

"After having looked forward with some curiosity to Dr. Beke's promised 'proofs' in favour of his 'true Mount Sinai,' I was disappointed, though I own not much surprised, to see that, in his

letter in the 'Times' of Monday, instead of trying to prove his own point (or to disprove ours), he adopts the tactics, so common in weak and doubtful causes, of running down the opposite side. His attempts to criticise and depreciate the Ordinance Survey of Sinai, and to discuss the topography of the Sinaitic Peninsula, are, nevertheless, singularly unhappy; indeed, the only conclusion to be drawn from them is, that he knows very little of the whole matter. Dr. Beke fancies, for example, that he detects a discordance between Major Wilson's adhesion to the Ras Sufsafeh and Mr. Holland's to Jebel Musa, whereas the slightest knowledge of the local features would have told him that there is no such discordance, the Ras Sufsafeh being simply a part of Jebel Musa. Dr. Beke asks whether we have disproved the pretensions of Jebel Serbal, Jebel Umm Shomer, and Jebel Katharina, or Jebel Sena (*sic*). Had he but examined our official reports and illustrations, which your reviewer was good enough to characterise as models of their kind, he could never have put this question. He speaks of our having adopted the monkish traditions; it can hardly be said that we have adopted so much as one of them. From these few specimens of our critic's accuracy and knowledge, your readers may estimate how much value can be attached to the assertion of himself, and of those 'well-informed persons' who agree with him, that the result of the Ordnance Survey has been to 'unsettle things more than ever.'

"Dr. Beke then urges that the whole question of the topography of the Exodus be reconsidered, on the basis of his theory that the sea which the children of Israel crossed is the Gulf of Akabah, and not the Gulf of Suez. Will it not be well, before assenting to so sweeping a proposal, to examine briefly what this theory demands, and also what it leads to?

"There is, to begin with, the very great difficulty that the distance from the generally-received site of Rameses (the starting-point of the Israelites) to the head of the Gulf of Akabah is fully 200 miles; whereas two stations only, Succoth and Etham, are mentioned in the narrative as intervening between that starting-point and the station from which the passage of the sea was effected. For disposing of this preliminary difficulty, Dr. Beke has recourse to two expedients. Firstly, in defiance of the testimony of history and of hieroglyphic monuments, and of the opinion of all comparative geographers and critics, he transfers the flourishing kingdom in which the Israelites were in bondage, the Mitzraim of Scripture—hitherto identified, without any question, with the Egypt of the Pharaohs—to the blank wilderness plateau east of the Isthmus of Suez, where there is neither vestige nor tradition of its existence. Having by this trifling feat brought Mitzraim to within a moderate distance of Akabah, Dr. Beke, for his second expedient,

argues that the journey from Rameses to the sea—hitherto believed to have occupied but three days, three stages only being mentioned in the Scripture itinerary—must have extended to no fewer than six days; and he adduces some ingenious, but by no means conclusive, reasons in favour of this hypothesis. Thus, by first moving Rameses perhaps eighty or a hundred miles to the eastward, at the bidding of his theory, and then galloping the Israelites—men, women, and children, flocks and herds and very much cattle—over some twenty miles daily, for six successive days, he brings them to the head of the Gulf of Akabah, and so across the sea.

"Thence, according to the Scripture narrative, there were at least ten days' journey (seventeen Dr. Beke ought to say, doubling the last seven stages) before Mount Sinai was reached. To be consistent, therefore, we should look for a Mount Sinai at from ten to seventeen days' journey, or at all events at a considerable distance, in some direction or other from Akabah. But Dr. Beke's 'true Mount Sinai' is within a day's walk of it, say fifteen miles; and in order to dispose of the intervening stages, he is driven to the desperate manœuvre of making the host first turn their backs upon their destination, march for five days (this time without any multiplication), to an encampment by the sea eighty miles down the east side of the Gulf of Akabah—which encampment, by the way, he now places at between thirty and forty miles from the position he last assigned to it—and then face about and retrace their steps to Sinai. Can Dr. Beke seriously suppose that Moses, who knew perfectly well where Sinai was, could have acted in this purposeless manner?

"It is difficult to write gravely upon this truly marvellous hypothesis. It is much as though, on learning that a pedestrian, some years ago, had walked from the Marble Arch to Charing Cross in half an hour, passing a post-office at about one-fourth of the way, one were to assume that Charing Cross really meant the Bank of England, and that the post-office must have been the General Post Office; and that, as there might be a little difficulty in maintaining that the distance from the Marble Arch to St. Martin's-le-Grand could be accomplished in some seven minutes on foot, it would only be right to assume that the seven minutes must have been fourteen minutes, thus increasing the half-hour to thirty-seven minutes; and that the Marble Arch, in defiance of all testimony to the contrary, must then have stood at the bottom of Tottenham Court Road, from which point an active man might possibly do it in the time. Then there would be twenty-three minutes left; so the pedestrian, instead of going on at once to the Bank, which he would reach much too soon, must be supposed to have wandered as far as the bottom of Ludgate Hill and back, in order to keep him walking all the time.

"This, sir, is the kind of theory, with its concomitant demands and results, which, so far as I can gather from his public writings, Dr. Beke would have us accept in the 'cause of truth.' It is needless to defend the Ordnance Survey against it, or to anticipate the verdict of the public. If the Biblical itinerary is to be manipulated in this fashion; if journeys are to be stretched to the breaking point at one end, compressed and looped-up at the other; if a well-identified ancient kingdom is to be moved about like a piece upon a chess-board, and the simple inferences from Scripture are to be multiplied, just when convenient, by two,—all to suit the fancies of a single theorist, who undertakes to settle a difficult question like this at the end of his first afternoon in the desert, and who has failed in the very matter which he set out to prove, and on which he had staked his reputation—then, surely, there is an end to the study of sacred or any other geography—an end, indeed, to all topographical inquiry. It were time for the Palestine Exploration Fund to wind up its affairs, and for the Royal Geographical Society to close its doors.

"I do not think that the points regarding myself in Dr. Beke's letter call for any remark. It may be as well, however, to assure him that when I wrote my last letter I was acquainted with his previous opinions, and that, in styling his present hypothesis 'new,' I did so because his 'true Mount Sinai' turns out to be not within fifty miles of the position he formerly suggested, to say nothing of the sudden abandonment of his 'volcano' theory—that *ignis fatuus* which led him to the desert.

"I will only add that, if Dr. Beke will give us an opportunity of breaking a friendly lance with him at the Geographical Society or elsewhere, my late colleagues and I shall be but too happy to encounter him, without the least 'personal feeling,' and simply in the interests of geography and truth. Nor would his present 'hallucinations' cause us to forget his justly earned eminence as a geographer and a scholar.

"Apologising for the length of this letter, and promising not to trouble you on the subject again."

[Dr. Beke had no opportunity afforded him of doing this, as, although he was frequently at the offices of the Royal Geographical Society, he was never asked to read a paper.]

Dr. Beke to the Editor of the "Times," published 9th April 1874.

Dr. Charles Beke writes to us in reply to the various correspondents who have disputed his claim to be the discoverer of the true Mount Sinai:—

"Were you to afford me ten times the space that I almost hesitate to ask you to grant me in the valuable columns of the 'Times,' it would hardly suffice for a complete answer to all the various matters

brought up against me in the letters of the members of the late Ordnance Survey published in the 'Times' of the 3d inst. The writers of those letters have put their foot down on my Mount Sinai, and seem determined, by every means in their power, to stamp out my theory, after the example of the late Dean Milman in the 'Quarterly Review.' This time, however, the attempt to crush me is, fortunately, made in the 'Times,' and as the maxim of your influential journal is '*Audi alteram partem*,' I fear not the result, let the odds against me be what they may.

"In the discussion of this most important question, which ought to be above party considerations of every kind, I regret to observe that my entreaty that all personal feelings might be laid aside has been disregarded. Major Palmer so far forgets himself as to speak of my 'hallucinations,' while the anonymous writer who has taken Mr. Holland's place expresses his suspicion that the name of Jebel-en-Nur—the 'Mountain of Light'—originated with myself! I will not notice what is virtually an imputation of fraud and imposture further than to say, that I think 'One who has been there' would have been ashamed to make it in his own name.

"Leaving these miserable personalities, I turn to the serious consideration of some of the main points in dispute. First, I am accused of having wrongfully charged the Ordnance Surveyors with unsettling, rather than settling, matters, and of differing among themselves as to the identification of the Mountain of the Law, and I am told that Jebel Musa and Ras Sufsafeh are the same. To this I reply, that I have before me a copy of the Ordnance Survey map, on which I see marked the two separate and distinct peaks of Jebel Musa with an elevation of 7363 feet, and Ras Sufsafeh with an elevation of 6541 feet, the former of those peaks being considered to be Mount Sinai, and the latter Mount Horeb; and, without raising a question as to whether the Horeb of Scripture was or was not a different mountain from Sinai, I would ask which of the two peaks shown on the map is deemed to be the Mountain of the Law? Tradition says the former, and Mr. Holland asserts his 'faith in Jebel Musa.' On the other hand, Major Wilson affirms that 'all the conditions required by the Bible narrative are fully met by the identification of Mount Sinai with the well-known Ras Sufsafeh;' and 'One who has been there' first charges me with 'error in describing Jebel Musa and Ras el Sufsafeh as two distinct mountains'—whereas what I said was that the latter 'is a separate *peak* further to the north' than Jebel Musa, as, in fact, the Ordnance Survey map shows it to be,—and then he speaks of 'that wondrous cliff,' from which he 'looked down on the great plain of El Rabah,' &c., that cliff being the 'separate peak' of Ras Sufsafeh, for from the summit of Jebel Musa the plain of El Rabah is not visible.

"Now, as the Mountain of the Law, whether called Sinai or Horeb, or both, cannot have been the two separate peaks in question, the members of the Surveying Expedition are bound to state categorically which of the two it is that they are 'perfectly agreed among themselves' is the one which was ascended by Moses in the sight of the children of Israel.

"Further, I would ask whether Professor Lepsius, Dr. Stewart, and the other learned travellers and scholars who have advocated the pretensions of Jebel Serbal, have signified their assent to the unqualified assertion that those pretensions 'have long yielded to the unquestionable results of recent scientific investigation'? If so, then it is desirable to know whether it is in favour of Jebel Musa or of the separate peak of Ras Sufsafeh that Jebel Serbal has so abdicated. Unless the advocates of the last-named mountain have done this, the result of the Ordnance Survey, as it appears to me, has been to unsettle matters more than ever by bringing forward the wondrous cliff of Ras Sufsafeh as a competitor for the honour of being the Mountain of the Law, in addition to the two rival peaks of Jebel Musa and Jebel Serbal.

"The use made of my incontrovertible proof that the Israelites were six days, and not three days, in reaching the Red Sea is quite characteristic. Mr. Holland asserted that the distance of three days 'exactly agrees with that of the head of the Gulf of Suez' from Ismailia, which place he makes to be the starting-point of the Israelites. His substitute now admits that it is 'more probable' the fugitives 'took six days than three' to travel this self-same distance. With such facile manipulations of the Bible itinerary, is it not true, as Mr. Holland himself avowed only a few years since, that 'all attempts to lay down the probable line of march of the children of Israel are mere guesswork'?

"But I must not confine myself to pointing out the inconsistencies of my opponents, lest I should really render myself amenable to Major Palmer's accusation, that, instead of trying to prove my own point, I adopt the tactics, so common in weak and doubtful causes, of attacking the opposite side, merely remarking that what is thus said reminds one of the fable of the wolf and the lamb, inasmuch as, instead of being the attacking party, I am the object of a systematic attack, begun without even waiting for my arrival in England to defend myself.

"The assertion that Jebel-en-Nur is 'a large flat-topped mountain' will be disproved when Mr. Milne's sketches of it shall appear in the 'Illustrated London News.' The further assertion that I place a 'region answering to the Egypt we know of' and 'a second Nile' somewhere within 'the country to the east of the spot which I reached,' displays what I am willing to believe is nothing more

than sheer ignorance. What I did say in my 'Origines Biblicæ' was that Mitzraim, the Land of Bondage of the Israelites, formed no portion of Egypt proper, but lay to the north-east, between it and the country of the Philistines, a people of cognate origin with the Mitzrites. Major Palmer is pleased to call this a hallucination. Sanely and dispassionately will I endeavour not only to prove it to be a sober truth, but likewise to show that since this theory of mine was enunciated, scholars generally have been coming to adopt substantially my views on the subject. At that time, now forty years ago, it was regarded as an indisputable fact that the Israelites were in bondage in the very heart of Egypt, where they built the Pyramids, and I know not what besides, and that their exodus was from Memphis, the capital, on the west side of the Nile, above Cairo. By degrees their starting-point has been shifted north-eastwards, so that in the map of 'Sinai and the Desert of the Wanderings,' in Dr. William Smith's 'Ancient Atlas,' Rameses is placed at or near Tell-el-Abbassiyeh, on the fresh-water canal, while Mr. Holland goes yet further, and places it at Ismailia, some thirty miles more to the east, and as much as seventy miles north-east of Memphis. I may here notice that on the same map I see marked three different spots, at distances of thirty miles or more apart, all with the name 'Kadesh-Barnea,' which affords an additional proof of the truth of Mr. Holland's assertion, that 'all attempts to lay down the probable line of march of the children of Israel are mere guesswork.'

"But to go back to the Land of Bondage. Ismailia being now recognised as the starting-point of the Israelites, it is manifest that the 'Bible itinerary' has been 'manipulated' to such an extent during the last forty years—not by me, but by others—as to come half-way to meet me. Nevertheless, it is asserted that my theory is 'in defiance of the testimony of history and of hieroglyphic monuments, and of the opinion of all comparative geographers and critics.' This is anything but the fact. Many years ago an Egyptologist of some repute, now deceased, asserted unequivocally that neither in the history nor on the hieroglyphic monuments of Egypt is there any evidence whatever of the presence of the Israelites in Egypt, and that, so far as history and those monuments are concerned, the Bible history might be a myth. I am grieved to say that of late years, and more especially within the last month, when I was in Egypt, I have heard the story of the Exodus denounced as a mere fable, and this by men of high standing in the scientific world. And yet, in fact, it is a fable, not in itself, but in the manner and form in which it is represented by the Septuagint translators and traditionists.

"The most recent investigations have, however, so modified the

history of the Israelites with reference to their sojourn in the Land of Bondage as to render the difference between the views of the most enlightened scholars and those entertained by myself little more than nominal, whereby the stigma attached to that history in its traditional form is fast being removed. The distinguished Egyptologist, M. Mariette, the founder and director of the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Boulak, thus writes in his able little work, 'Aperçu de l'Histoire d'Egypte' (2nd edit., 1872), p. 41 :—

"'Strong presumptions tend to make us believe that the Patriarch Joseph came into Egypt under the Shepherds, and that the scene of the touching story related in the Book of Genesis was the court of one of those foreign kings. Joseph was therefore not the Minister of a Pharaoh of national extraction. It was a Shepherd king—that is to say, a Shemite like himself, whom Joseph served, and the elevation of the Hebrew Minister becomes the more intelligible on the assumption that he was patronised by a sovereign of the same race as himself.'

"Thus, according to Mr. Holland, the Land of Bondage was at or near Ismailia, on, if not beyond, the confines of Egypt proper, and according to M. Mariette (*loc. cit.*), the people among whom the Israelites dwelt were not Egyptians at all, but a race of foreign shepherds whose descendants and representatives are 'those foreigners with robust limbs, harsh features, and oval faces, who to this day inhabit the shores of Lake Menzaleh'—foreigners to whom, as Professor Owen truly states in the 'Times' of May 25, 1869, 'Egypt was indebted for the horse as a beast of draught. Previous to this Philistine or Arabian invasion, the manifold frescoes in the tombs of Egyptian worthies show no other soliped than the ass. The dromedary was a still later introduction.'

"And what is the ungarbled evidence of the Hebrew Scriptures themselves? In that inestimable canon of ethnology and geography handed down to us in the tenth chapter of Genesis, it is recorded, under the head of the Children of Ham, that 'Mitzraim begat . . . Pathrusim and Casluhim, out of whom came Philistim;' showing that the Mitzrites or Shepherds and the Philistines were nations of cognate origin, with which fact the conclusions of M. Mariette, Professor Owen, and myself are in perfect harmony.

Had the translators of the Septuagint Greek version but stuck to their text, and retained the Hebrew name 'Mitzraim' in the subsequent portions of their work, as they have done in the passage just cited, the prevailing error against which I have so long contended might never have arisen, or at all events could not have become so deeply rooted as it is. But only two chapters further on, when the migrations of the Patriarch Abram are narrated, it is

said that, as he 'journeyed, going on still towards the south, there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there' (Gen. xii. 9, 10)—the identical word 'Mitzraim' of the tenth chapter being thus, in the very next page, unwarrantably altered to 'Egypt.'

"Mitzraim, then, was a country lying to the north-east of Egypt proper, towards Philistia, possessing in the earliest ages both horses and dromedaries ('camels'), which Egypt did not till subsequently; and being, like Philistia, famous for its vast corn-fields, which during ages furnished to the Israelites a resource in periods of famine. This is instanced in the story of the Shunamite widow, who, having been forewarned by Elisha of the approaching famine, 'went with her household into the land of the Philistines seven years' (2 Kings viii. 1, 2), precisely as, eight centuries previously, her ancestor the Patriarch Jacob and his household had, under a similar seven years' famine, migrated into the neighbouring corn-growing country of the Mitzrites.

"How so gross an error as that of confounding Egypt with Mitzraim should have arisen is a story too long to be repeated in the 'Times;' besides, it is already narrated in 'Origines Biblicæ.' But one of the consequences of this error, which is not noticed in my work, may be briefly stated here. When the Patriarch Joseph introduced his father and brethren to Pharaoh he directed them to say, 'Thy servants are shepherds,' for the reason, as is alleged in all the versions of the Scriptures that follow the Greek Septuagint, though not in the Targum of Onkelos, that 'every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians' (Gen. xlvi. 34). Now this assertion, taken by itself and apart from the context, is no doubt literally true, for the Shepherds, or Hyksos, that is to say the Mitzrites, were held in intense hatred by the Egyptians, though even then it would not be intelligible why Joseph should have so specially directed his kinsmen to say their occupation was that of this accursed race. But, taken in connection with the context and with the facts of the history as now beginning to be understood, it would be the height of absurdity to imagine Joseph to have told his father that every shepherd was an abomination to a people who were themselves shepherds.

"The fact is, however, that the word *to'ebah* of the Hebrew text, which is so wrongly translated 'abomination,' has, like the Greek *'ανάθημα* and the Latin *sacer*, a double meaning. It cannot well be rendered into English so as to preserve the ambiguity, though Milton has 'But to destruction sacred and devote.' But in French it may be said *tout pasteur est sacré*, which may be understood as signifying either *un homme sacré* or *un sacré homme*, and the Septuagint translators, in their ignorance, adopted the latter meaning. There can, however, be no doubt that the true inter-

pretation of what Joseph said to his father is, 'Every shepherd is sacred (or an object of respect or veneration) to the Mitzrites.' The same error is committed with respect to the sheep, the sacred animal of the Mitzrites, which Moses told Pharaoh it was not meet for him to sacrifice in the land; for, said he, 'so shall we sacrifice the *to'ebah*'—that is, *l'animal sacré*, and not *le sacré animal*—'of the Mitzrites before their eyes, and will they not stone us?' (Exod. viii. 26).

"In the 'Times' of March 30th I adduced a further instance of the ignorance displayed by the Greek translators in supposing the golden image made by Aaron for the children of Israel to worship at Sinai to have been in the form of a calf, as representing an Egyptian deity, instead of a cone, the emblem of fire, in which form alone the Almighty had been manifested to Moses and the people.

"Under such circumstances there is not, after all, anything extraordinary in the fact that those translators imagined Mitzraim, in which country shepherds and their flocks were venerated and respected, to be Egypt, where the foreign Hyksos, Shepherds, or Mitzrites were truly 'an abomination.'

"The bearing of this general question on the particular subject now under discussion with the members of the Ordnance Survey is this:—At the time when the Israelites were still in bondage under the Mitzritish shepherds Moses 'fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian' (Exod. ii. 15), which land is a portion of the 'east country' (Gen. xxv. 6), that is to say, the country east of Jordan. While there, 'Moses kept the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, and he led the flock to the back'—in Hebrew *akhor*, meaning 'west'—'side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb' (Exod. iii. 1).

"Now, it may well seem incomprehensible that the traditional Mount Sinai, instead of being at the west side of the land of Midian in the 'east country,' should have been placed within the peninsula between the two Gulfs of Suez and Akaba, in a region far away to the south of the 'south country' (Gen. xx. 1); and not less so must be the idea that Moses should have fled from the face of Pharaoh into a district in which there was a colony of Egyptians, with copper mines worked by them, as the hieroglyphics there show. But what seems the most incomprehensible of all is that it should have come to be imagined that the Israelites, who were constantly in a state of insubordination and even rebellion, and anxiously longing to return into Mitzraim ('Egypt'), should have been led by Moses into the *cul-de-sac* between the two Gulfs, where they were almost within sight of Egypt, and whence at any moment they would not have had the slightest difficulty in re-

turning. The key to the whole of these inconsistencies and absurdities is this :—At some remote period, probably in the early ages of Christianity, it was found convenient to have the Mountain of God near at hand for pilgrims to visit, and therefore it was removed into its present traditional position from its true place on the west side of the desert of Midian, in the east country, beyond the Valley of the Jordan and the Sea of Edom, where, following the indications of Scripture, I declared forty years ago it was to be sought for, and now, *before I die*, I have been enabled to discover it ; in like manner as, at a later age of the Christian era, it became necessary for the accommodation of pilgrims to transport the 'Holy House' from Nazareth, first into Dalmatia, and then to Loreto, where it is believed to stand by those multitudes who look on tradition and 'authority' as of greater weight than the dictates of truth and common sense.

"But I have been led to dilate far more than I intended. At the outset of this controversy, Major Wilson truly said that your paper is hardly fitting for a long discussion of this sort. I only lament that I should be under the necessity of occupying so much of your valuable space in answering strictures on what was meant by me to be a simple statement, for the information of your readers and the public at large, of what I had done and seen on the journey from which I have just returned, without imagining it would have been subjected to such animadversions, at all events not until the full particulars had been published of what I believe will be admitted to be a most important discovery by all except those who are interested in upholding the traditional identifications. I must further explain, that in making that statement in the 'Times' I had no possible motive for alluding to the Ordnance Survey of the peninsula, inasmuch as it relates to a totally different region from that visited by me; and for the same reason I have now no need to avail myself of Major Wilson's friendly offer to produce to me all the published documents connected with that survey. Such an offer, however well meant, is much the same (he will permit me to say) as if, now that the Astronomer Royal has shown that when Cæsar invaded Britain his fleet on leaving Dover sailed with the tide down Channel instead of up, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (I must beg Earl Granville's pardon for the absurd proposition) were to offer to place at my disposal charts of the Downs and the east coast of Kent, with a map of Deal and the vicinity, and even a plan with sections and elevations of Walmer Castle, in order to illustrate Cæsar's landing on the south coast.

"I must thank you for your impartiality and great consideration in thus allowing me to defend myself from what I cannot but regard as a most uncalled-for attack on the part of the members of the Ordnance Survey."

On the Exodus of the Israelites.

Dr. Beke to the "Athenæum," published 16th May 1874.

"When I was at Cairo in the beginning of last March, on my way back from *Jebel-en-Nur*, which I identify with Mount Sinai, I was informed by Professor Brugsch, the distinguished Egyptologist, that it was radically erroneous to imagine the Children of Israel, in their Exodus, to have crossed the Red Sea, whether this be the Gulf of Suez as is generally supposed, or the Gulf of Akaba as I contend; for that the sea through which the fugitives passed was the Serbonian Lake near Mount Casius, in the north-east of Egypt. Upon this point he told me there was no possible room for doubt. Egyptian hieroglyphical inscriptions identify Rameses, whence the Israelites commenced their flight, with Tanis, now represented by San, and they likewise establish the position of the several stations on the route from Rameses to the Red Sea. He added, that, after the passage through the sea, the only localities he had found mentioned were 'Marah' and the 'land of Sina,' of which the positions were not yet determinable.

"The coolness with which the erudite Professor expounded all these matters to me was quite refreshing. Repeatedly did he assure me that he was not expressing any opinion of his own: it is no matter of opinion; the inscriptions speak for themselves. And he was so obliging as to look them up from the immense collection of materials he is amassing for a Geographical Dictionary, on which he has long been engaged, in order that, as he said, I might read them myself. As my knowledge of hieroglyphics, however, is almost limited to what I learned from Dr. Thomas Young's discovery before M. Champollion's system was invented, I was content to take Professor Brugsch's word for everything being as he stated; though, at the same time, I could have no difficulty in recognising the bridge over which the Israelites crossed the Pelusiac arm of the Nile, with the crocodiles in the river, as depicted in one of the pieces shown to me.

"I was given to understand that it would be some considerable time before the particulars of this interesting discovery would be made known to the world; but from a letter from Cairo, published in the 'Times' of the 28th ultimo, I perceive that Professor Brugsch, stimulated apparently by my visit to him, has just read a paper before a society in that city, in which he has publicly enunciated what he had so kindly imparted to me privately.

"From the printed report of that paper I gather that its author repudiates altogether the expression 'Yam Suf,' or 'Red Sea' of

the Scriptures, for the reason that it occurs only in Moses' Song in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus, which was 'composed a long time after the occurrence;' whereas 'in the true historical narrative there is only mention made in a general way of '*the* sea,' which was the Mediterranean.' My impression however is, though of course I may be mistaken, that Professor Brugsch showed me some characters, which he read 'Yam Sufa,' as being the name of the body of water through which the Israelites passed. It may be expedient to explain that the expression in the original Hebrew text translated 'Red Sea,' is 'Yam Suf,' that is to say, the 'Sea of Suf,' this being the denomination of the sea 'in the land of Edom' of 1 Kings ix. 26, on the shore of which was Ezion-Geber, where Solomon, king of Israel, in conjunction with Hiram, king of Tyre, made a navy of ships to go to Ophir. And as the Hebrew word 'Edom' means 'red,' the name of this 'Edom' Sea was, in accordance with the custom of the Tyrians or Phœnicians, and, after their example, of the Greeks, translated 'Eythræan' or 'Red' Sea; and this term, though in the first instance belonging to the Gulf of Akaba alone, became applied to the entire Arabian Gulf, and thence was eventually extended to the seas washing the whole coast of Arabia, and even to the Indian Ocean; just as, in later ages, the names of 'Atlantic' and 'Pacific,' which belonged in the first instance to the seas on the west coasts of Africa and America respectively, have been extended to the entire oceans of the two hemispheres.

"Professor Brugsch says, however, that the 'Red Sea' is named only in Moses' Song, and that in the historical narrative of the Exodus mention is made in a general way of '*the* sea' alone. But on this I feel myself called on to remark that the expression 'Yam Suf' occurs in more than one place besides Moses' Song in connection with the passage of the Israelites through the sea. For instance, in Exodus xiii. 16, 17, it is said that 'God led the Israelites, not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, . . . but God led the people about by the way of the wilderness of the *Yam Suf*;' and in Exodus xv. 22, after Moses' Song is ended and the historical narrative is resumed, it is said, 'And (wrongly translated 'so') Moses brought Israel from the *Yam Suf*, and they went into the wilderness of Shur.' Further, in Numbers xxxiii. 8, after it has been said that 'they departed from before Pihahiroth, and passed through the midst of *the sea* into the wilderness,' it is stated, in verse 10, that 'they removed from Elim, and encamped by the *Yam Suf*.'

"The report in the 'Times' adds that Mariette Bey has given his adherence to the conclusions of Professor Brugsch, whom he considers to have adduced arguments 'short and few, but irresistibly solid,' in support of his theory; which theory, he says,

'explains all difficulties hitherto experienced, and takes away every stumbling-block.'

"It remains to be seen what the members of the Ordnance Survey of the peninsula of the traditional Mount Sinai will say to these novel views, they having, in their recent controversy with me (see the 'Times' of 3d and 9th April), appealed to 'the testimony of history and of hieroglyphic monuments.

"For my part, as I have not the same faith as they have in the hieroglyphic monuments as hitherto interpretated, I am not made at all uneasy by Professor Brugsch's reading from them of the Scripture history. At the same time, I may remark that, assuming for the sake of argument the correctness of his theory, there might be a means of reconciling it with mine, which places Mount Sinai in the 'east country' beyond the land of Edom and its sea—the Red (Edom) Sea, or Gulf of Akaba; whereas Professor Brugsch's views appear to be utterly irreconcilable with those of the Ordnance Surveyors and the traditionists, who place that mountain in the Peninsula between the Gulfs of Akaba and Suez, far away to the south of the 'south country.'"

C.

Meteorological Observations made on a Journey to Mount Sinai (Jebel Bághir).

By Dr. Charles T. Beke, Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.G.S., &c.

Date.	Station.	Temp of Air.	Aneroids. B.	Aneroids. M.	Hypsometer. 17454	Hypsometer. 17449	Elevation above Sea.
1874.		Deg.			Deg.	Deg.	Feet.
Jan. 31, 8 A.M.	Foot of Mount Sinai (Bághir).	...	28.21	27.25	...	...	...
,, ,, noon.	Summit.	...	24.92	...	...	...	5136. Aneroid probably shaken 1876.
,, ,, 4½ P.M.	Foot of mountain.	...	28.05	27.25	...	...	
Feb. 1, 8 A.M.	Do.	44	28.17	27.25	209	...	Hypsometer doubtful.
,, ,, noon.	Wady Hesma.	...	27.62	26.70	...	...	2403
,, ,, 2 P.M.	Mount Atághtagieh	...	...	25.67	...	...	3417
,, ,, 4 ,,	Wady Hesma.	...	...	26.65	...	...	2403
,, 2, 7½ A.M.	Do.	...	27.61	26.63	...	...	...
,, ,, 8 ,,	Do.	50	...	...	207.8	207.8	...
,, 3, 7 ,,	Do.	50	27.70	26.73	...	...	...
,, ,, 3 P.M.	Wady Ithem, a little above station of Jan. 31st.	53	27.97	27.02	...	...	2032
,, 4, 7 A.M.	Do.	53	28.02	27.10	...	...	...
,, ,, noon.	Wady Amran.	51	28.23	27.32	...	...	1751
,, 5, 7 A.M.	Do.	38.5	28.32	27 32	...	...	...
,, ,, 3 P.M.	Sea-shore, north of Akaba.	72	30.07	29.35	...	...	...
,, ,, 9 ,,		...	30.16	29.45	...	...	...
,, 6, 10 A.M.	Do.	63	30.18	...	212.2	...	...
,, ,, 1½ P.M.	Do.	70	30.10	...	...	...	...
,, 7, 8 A.M.	Do.	56	30.22	29.42	...	...	...
,, ,, 3½ P.M.	Wady Satkh.	54	29.00	28.06	...	...	1010
,, 8, 7 A.M.	Do.	48	29.10	28.12	...	...	...
,, ,, 10 A.M.	Ras es Satkh.	...	28.02	27.07	...	...	2006
,, ,, 4 P.M.	Et Tih, below Tarf-el-Rukn.	47.5	28.15	27.16	...	...	1839
,, 9, 6½ A.M.		32	28.19	27.19	...	...	...
,, ,, 4½ P.M.	Et Tih.	...	28.01	27.10	...	...	2012
,, 10, 7 A.M.	Do.	48	28.02	27.00	...	...	...
,, ,, 6 P.M.	Wady Rith.	49	28.62	27.62	...	...	1384
,, 11, 6½ A.M.	Do.	42	28.67	27.68	...	...	...
,, ,, 9 P.M.	Kallaat en Nakhl.	48	29.01	28.14	...	...	1044 by Aneroid B; 919 by Aneroid M.
,, 12, 7 A.M.	Do.	34	...	...	...	...	...
,, ,, 8 ,,	Do.	36	...	...	210.9	210.8	713
,, ,, 6½ P.M.	Wady Nethilah.	51	28.92	27.95	...	...	1101
,, 13, 7 A.M.	Do.	45	28.97	28.01	...	...	...
,, ,, 6 P.M.	Wady-el-Hawawiet.	47	28.65	27.74	...	...	1371
,, 14, 7 A.M.	Do.	38 5	28.67	27.75	...	...	...
,, ,, 9½ ,,	Jebel Heitan.	...	28.37	...	...	...	1659
,, ,, 6 P.M.	Ras el Gibab.	48	29.02	28.14	...	...	1013
,, 15, 7 A.M.	Do.	...	29.07	28.17	...	...	...
,, ,, 6 P.M.	Plain of Nowatir.	57	30.05	29.22	...	...	91
,, 16, 7 A.M.	Do.	40	30.02	29.14	...	...	...
,, ,, 7 P.M.	Suez.	62.5	30.27	...	212.6	212.4	...

Remarks.—The hypsometers were certified at Kew Observatory in April 1873 to have minus errors varying from .05 to .20 of a degree.

Aneroid B was found to have a plus error of 0.21 at outset, and 0.23 on return. Nothing appears to be known of its behaviour under great change of pressure and temperature.

Aneroid M indicated nearly one inch too low.

When the hypsometer observations are corrected for the errors found nine months previously, and the corresponding pressures taken from Regnault's Tables of Tension, these pressures do not agree, as they should do, with the readings of aneroid B corrected for its said error.

It may safely be assumed that the bulbs of the hypsometers have contracted sufficiently to eradicate the minus errors. Still, even assuming the hypsometers to be correct, it does not reconcile their indications with those of aneroid B unless it be also assumed that the error assigned to it is not satisfactory, although the discordance is then not so great. Accordingly, the hypsometers have to be considered correct, and used to check aneroid B, and B has been used to check M. Thus, on

Feb.	1,	hypsometer	209°	= pressure	28.18 ;	aneroid	29.17,	cor. +.01
,,	2,	,,	207.8	= ,,	27.51	,,	27.61	,, −.10
,,	6,	,,	212.2	= ,,	30.04	,,	30.18	,, −.14
,,	12,	,,	210.85	= ,,	29.25	,,	?	
,,	16,	,,	212.5	= ,,	30.22	,,	30 27	,, −.05

Rejecting the first, which is marked doubtful, the mean is −·10, and this correction has been used throughout for aneroid B.

Dove's Thermal Charts show the mean temperature to be 60° in February in the peninsula of Sinai; and Buchan's Memoir on Atmospheric Pressure gives for

Suez,	in January	30.095,	and in February	30.127
Ismailia,	,,	30.062	,,	30.079
Port Said,	,,	30.080	,,	30.103
Cairo,	,,	30.000	,,	30.036

The mean of these is 30.07, which corrected for latitude, as the formula for finding heights requires, is 30.03 inches; and this agrees very closely with the actual observations at the sea level.

R. STRACHAN.

May 12, 1874.

D.

COPY OF PROFESSOR OLIVER'S DETERMINATION OF PLANTS COLLECTED NEAR AKABA BY MR. JOHN MILNE, F.G.S., ON DR. BEKE'S EXPEDITION TO SINAI IN ARABIA, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1874.[1]

Diplotaxis (Moricandia) hesperidiflora, DC. Between Akaba and Suez.
Erucaria aleppica, Gaert. Between Akaba and Suez.
Zilla myagroides, Forsk. Madiān.
Malcolmia pulchella, Boiss. Between Akaba and Suez.
Crucifer in fl. and young pod only. I have not yet determined this (Petala florida purpuro vinosa). Between Akaba and Suez.
Cleome droserifolia, Del. Madiān.
Capparis spinosa, L. ? (leaves). Jebel Bághir.
Reseda canescens, L. Wady Etham.
Polycarpæa prostrata, Decaisne. Akaba.
Fagonia cretica (Arabica and vars.). Wady Etham, Madiān, and between Akaba and Suez ?
Erodium pulverulentum ? Cav. or E. laciniatum Cav. ? (minute specimen). Between Akaba and Suez.
Erodium sp. ? indeterminable. Between Akaba and Suez.
Sageretia brandrethiana,[2] Aitch. ? (very near S. theezans). Jebel Bághir.
Zizyphus Spina-Christi (leafy specimen only). Jebel Bághir.
Ononis.[3] A monstrous state of O. Natrix ? (calyx lobis dentatis). Jebel Bághir.
Cassia acutifolia, Del. Between Akaba and Suez.
Acacia (minute fragment). Madiān.
Trigonella sp. ? Insufficient. Wady Etham.
Genista monosperma (Retama Rœtam). Between Akaba and Suez.
Colutea haleppica, Lam. ? Jebel Bághir.
Onobrychis ? (leaf only). Between Akaba and Suez.
Astragalus ? (leaves). Akaba.
Calendula arvensis ? Between Akaba and Suez.
Conyza,[4] an sp. nov. ? Can this be a glabrous variety of C. ægyptiaca ? Madiān.
Artemisia, an A. maritima. Akaba.

[1] See "Notes on the Flora of the Desert of Sinai," by Richard Milne Redhead, F.L.S., in "Journal of Linnean Society," vol. ix., 1867, in illustration of the present list.
[2] Had not been found east of the Muscat region of Arabia.
[3] If normal, is curious.
[4] Appears to be a new species.

Scorzonera? (leafy specimen). Eaten by Beduins; called by them Sasel. Not determinable.
Senecio coronopifolius. Between Akaba and Suez.
Salvia ægyptiaca, L. Wady Etham and Akaba.
Salvia deserti, Decaisne. Akaba.
Lavandula, an L. pubescens, L. multifida, and a few additional indeterminable Labiatæ. Jebel Bághir.
Anchusa? (imperfect specimen). Akaba.
Phelipæa, probably P. lutea, Desf. Madiān (with drawing).
Forskolea tenacissima, L. Akaba.
Mercurialis annua, L. Jebel Bághir.
Merendera caucasica, M.B. Jebel Bághir.
Muscari botryoides, Mill. Jebel Bághir.
Muscari frons (leaf?)
Nothòlæna lanuginosa. Wady Etham.
Cheilanthes odorata. Jebel Bághir.

E.

List of Shells collected on Dr. Beke's Expedition to Sinai in Arabia in 1874, by Mr. John Milne, F.G.S.

First List.

1. Conus arenatus.
2. Cassis vibex.
3. Nerita polita.
4. Turbinella polygona.
5. Psammobia rugosa.
6. Malea pomum.
7. Triton pilearis.
8. Strombus gibberulus.
9. Conus nussatella.
10. Cerithium nodulosum.
11. Conus tesselatus.
12. Terebellum subulatum.
13. Modulus tectum.
14. Nassa arcularia.
15. Strombus urcens.
16. Clanculus pharaonis.

Second List.

1. Amphidesma.
2. Triton rubecula.
3. Harpa solida.
4. Young Cypræa.
5. Pollia sp.
6. Haliotis.
7. Mactra decora.
8. Cardita angisulcata.
9. Purpura intermedia.
10. Arca.
11. Conus quercinus.
12. Pecten senatorius.
13. Arca decussata.
14. Natica mammilla.
15. Nassa sp.
16. Phasianella.
17. Nassa.
18. Venus.
19. Conus textile.
20. Lima squamosa.
21. Ricinula morio.
22. Trochus virgatus.
23. Circe arabica.
24. Conus virgo.
25. Venus crispata.
26. Cypræa globulus.
27. Pecten ziezae.
28. Cerithium sp.
29. Turbo margaritaceus.
30. Chama ruppellii.
31. Nerita arabica.
32. Cypræa.
33. Fusus sp.
34. Cytherea blanda.
35. Tridacna elongata.
36. Pectunculus pauciplictus.
37. Terebra nubeculata.
38. Strombus fusiformis.
39. Pecten pes-felis.
40. Arca hanleyana.
41. Strombus floridus.
42. Nerita haustrum.
43. Trochus sanguinolentus.
44. Cypræa turdus.
45. Conus monile.
46. Pteria young.
47. Lucuna divaricata.
48. Conus pennaceus.
49. Natica albula.
50. Acra antiquata.

51. Lucina pila.
52. Operculum of Turbo.
53. Tellina scobiculta.
54. Cerithium.
55. Lucina tumida.
56. Strombus gibberulus, &c.
57. Tellina rugosa.
58. Natica.
59. Clanculus pharaonis.
60. Pectunculus lividus.
61. Ricinula elongata.

INDEX.

AARON, 64, 76.
Abana river, 48.
Abbas Pasha, 477.
Abdeh, 57.
Abdin, palace of, 239, 503, 505.
Abimelech, 55.
Abocharabos, 30.
Abraham, 3, 47, 48, 51, 55, 68, 100, 101.
Abu Nabut, 223, 226, 229, 230, 234, 254, 382, 387, 389, 432, 445, 458, 493, 521, 522.
Abydos, table of, 88, 89, 90.
Abyssinia, 53, 81, 119, 241, 242, 323, 324, 398, 400, 520.
Abyssinians, 97, 120.
Africa, 53.
Aila, 20.
Ainúnah, 325, 326, 327, 328, 330.
  Aqueduct of, 329.
Airy, Sir G. B., 395.
Akaba, 71, 187, 220, 221, 224, 225, 244, 245, 372–375, 378, 444, 456, 458, 492.
  Castle of, 372, 373, 375.
  Garrison of, 376, 379.
  Governor (Muhafiz), 385, 390, 451, 457.
  Gulf of, 3, 6, 38, 46, 62, 66, 67, 72, 74, 77, 360–367, 370, 371.
  Head of, 372, 458, 459, 464.
  Money for, 236.
  Mûdir of, 255.
Akaba—
  Sheikh of, 255, 265, 374, 383–389, 396, 438.
Albert Nyanza, 496.
Alexandria, 5, 26, 31, 120, 147, 154, 179, 369, 521.
  Harbour of, 164, 252, 523.
  Library of, 84.
American cousins, 133.
  Consulate, 172.
  Oriental topographical corps, 509, 516–519.
  Palestine exploration, 440.
Ammonius, 20, 21, 23, 27, 29.
Ammonites, 67, 68.
Anthony, St., 19.
Antioch, 24.
Apecarius, Julius, 84.
Apis, 41.
Arabah Wady, or Ghor, 67.
Arabia, 4, 5, 29, 335.
  Peninsula of, 367.
Arabia Petræa, 4.
Arabian Desert, 73.
Arabian Gulf, 20, 362, 368, 369.
Arabians, Syro, 97, 99.
Arabic, 32.
Arabs, 18, 498.
Arab tribes—
  Aluwîn, Sheikh of, 383, 389, 391, 396, 425, 426, 440, 456.
  Amrani, 439, 441.
  Azázimeh, 8.

Arab tribes—
Beni Ughba, 348.
Dress of, 440, 476.
Héiwat, 474, 477.
Taiyáha, 445, 478.
Terabín, 445, 478.
Towára, 389, 432, 440, 441, 446, 456, 457, 477.
Aram Naharaim, 48, 49.
Arendrup, Lieut. von, 519, 520.
Aretas, 4.
Arîsh Wady-el, 62, 63.
Asenath, 103.
Asia, 53, 54.
Asiatics, 97.
Ass, the, 99.
Assyria, 51, 68.
'Athenæum,' the, 142, 145, 177, 260, 500.
Aujeh, El, 62.
Avalitic Gulf, 20.

BÁGHIR, 481.
Bághir Jebel, 13, 381, 392, 393, 396, 399, 401, 402, 406 to 412, 425, 437, 442, 464, 471, 474, 503, 504, 505.
Bahr el Ghazal, 162.
Bairam, Feast of, 378.
Baker, Sir S., 127.
Bakhshish, 437, 439.
Barakan Island, 322, 324.
Battan, Ras Sheikh el, 311, 312.
Beduins, 12, 13, 73, 74, 405, 409, 414, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431.
Beer-lahai-roi, 51.
Beersheba, 2, 62.
Beke, Dr., 69, 434, 524.
Bekesbourne, 494.
Bered, 51.
Bethel, 48, 49, 50.
Beyerlé, Mr., 168.
Birch, Dr. Samuel, 122.
Bir el Máshiyah, 355, 356, 357.
Blemmyes, 20.
Brindisi, 138.
British Consulate, 493.
British flag, 297.
British Government, 241, 502.
British interests, 335.
British Magazine, 171.
British Museum, 516.
British subjects, 295.
Brugsch Bey, 507, 511, 521.
Burckhardt, 11, 14, 15, 16, 144, 320, 330, 345, 346, 347, 386, 417, 418, 419.
Burton, Capt. R., 69, 146, 177.
Burton, Mrs., 170, 330.
Bush, the, 21.
Byzantine, 12.

CAIRO, 12, 166, 167, 191, 193, 194, 231, 259, 489, 503.
Cemetery of, 202.
Esbekiah, 503.
Hotels of, 153, 163, 167, 196.
Museum of, 179, 202.
Post-office of, 193, 195, 511.
Telegraph Company at, 201, 259, 260, 261, 267, 294.
Camels, 60, 99, 478.
Canaan, 48, 52, 54, 65.
Canals, 243.
Canterbury, Archbishop of, 515.
Casluhim, 47, 50.
Catherine, Mount St., 11, 12.
Caves, 485.
Champollion, 85, 89, 512.
Children of Israel, 45.
Christ, the, 166.
Christians, 9, 44, 370.
Clarke, Mr. Latimer, 174.
Cleopatra's Needle, 71.
Clysma, 20.
Colenso, Bishop, 73, 94.
Constantinople, 31.
Controversy, 556.

Cook, Thomas, & Co., 168, 184, 189, 225, 250.
Cook's tourists, 409, 415.
Cooke, Mr. W. E., 250.
Copper mines, 39, 71.
Coral reefs, 321.
Cosmas Indicopleustes, 27, 29, 31.
Cotton, 243.
Cul-de-sac, 39.

DAHABIEHS, 214, 215.
Dalmatia, 15.
Damascus, 4, 5, 15, 48.
Darfûr, 177, 242.
Dead Sea, 9, 67.
Desert of the Exodus, 35, 56.
Dillon, Mr. F., 184, 202, 501.
Dinkas, 113, 114.
Dowár, 60.
Dragomans, 198, 204, 207, 223, 225, 228, 230, 231.
Abdullah Joseph, 495, 497.
Drake, Mr. C. Tyrwhitt, 56.
Dromedary, the, 99, 100.

EAST Country, 3, 67, 74, 75, 80.
Ebers, Dr., 14.
Eboda, 57.
Editors, 209, 268.
Edom, 38, 46, 66, 363, 364.
Sea of, 46, 66.
Egypt, 6, 9, 10, 17, 25, 38, 39, 45, 46, 50, 51, 52, 56, 80, 81, 92, 93, 106, 116, 117, 119, 120, 123, 127, 147, 179, 180, 187, 196–198, 259, 367, 369, 370, 383, 521.
Bank of, 161, 167, 238.
Fellah of, 206.
"History of," 202.
Its finances, 294, 295.
Lists of sovereigns of, 82, 83, 84, 85, 92.
Money for, 210, 238.
Egypt—
Monuments of, 85–92.
Museum of, 91.
"Notes on," 269–284, 488.
Post-office of, 299.
River of, 63.
Egyptians, 21, 39, 40, 41, 94, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 105, 106, 113, 116, 367.
Egyptologists, 122.
Egyptian Government, 295, 296.
Egyptian mining settlements, 42, 43.
Egyptian *Muhafiz*, 373, 377, 379, 380.
Egyptian mummies, 514.
Egyptian navy, 335, 511.
Egyptian Trading Co., 160.
Elanitic Gulf, 17.
Elijah, the Prophet, 416.
Elim, 41, 72, 405.
Elisha, the Prophet, 55, 56.
El Tih, 473.
England, the Queen of, 335, 397.
English language, 324.
'Erin,' the, 266, 267, 286, 288, 291, 293, 296, 297, 298, 299, 301, 302, 303, 378, 381, 387, 388, 487, 491.
Crew of, 374.
Eshkol, 58.
Eternal, the, 55.
Euphrates, 63, 68.
Eusebius, 84.
Eutychius, 44.
Evans, Capt., 139, 140, 149.
Exodus of the Israelites, 46, 94, 98, 112, 118, 123.

FAIRBAIRN, Sir W., 255.
Fedrigo Pasha, 163, 164, 165, 180.
Feiran, 7, 8, 17, 27.
Firman, 220, 221, 227, 245, 254, 255, 265.

Fiskiyeh, 60.
Fleischer, Prof., 501.
Fleming, Mr. R., 163.
Foreign Office, 155, 493.
Forster Bey, 288, 294, 295, 296.
Fowler, Mr., 250, 255, 256, 557.
French, 205, 504.
  Language of the, 324.
Frere, Sir Bartle, 381.

GALATIANS, 4.
Garrod, Dr., 233.
Gaul, 101.
Gaza, 19.
Genesis, 47, 50, 72.
Geographical Society, 96, 125, 127.
Geology, 407, 525.
  Specimens, 387, 405, 476, 487.
George, Capt., 127, 412.
Gerar, 51, 55.
Gesenius, 107, 108.
Ghor, the, 73.
Gibbs, Mr., 267, 491.
Gideon, 68, 71.
Gold, 69.
Gondokoro, 495.
Gordon Pasha, 127, 128, 158, 494–497, 500.
Goshen, Land of, 106, 110, 285.
Governments, 429.
Greeks, 7, 19, 31, 32.
Greenfield, Mr., 252.

HAAG, Mr. Carl, 185, 213.
Hadj, the, 129, 231.
Hagar, 51.
Hale, Archdeacon, 515.
Ham, 47.
Hammâm, Fir'ôn, 306.
Halevy, Mr., 499.
Haran, 48, 175, 229.
Harra Radjlâ, 386, 440.
Has Bashi, 382.
Hashim, 522.
Havilah, 51, 68, 72.
Hebrew Scriptures, 45.
Hebrews, 106, 107, 109.
Hebron, 27, 51, 57, 58, 62.
Hecatæus, 80, 83.
Hematite (iron ore), 476.
Herodotus, 80, 82, 83, 95, 367.
Heroöpolitan Gulf, 17, 20.
Hieroglyphics, 39, 100, 514, 515.
Hilarion, 19.
Himyaritic inscriptions, 423, 499.
Hiram, 38.
Hittites or Scyths, 96.
Holland, Mr., 285, 523.
Holy Scriptures, 47.
Hor, Mount, 394.
Horeb, 2, 12, 16, 28, 37, 76, 77, 404, 405, 412, 417, 503.
Horites, 381.
Horse, the, 99, 100.
Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, 93, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 106, 113, 116, 123, 200, 202, 204.

IBRAHIM Pasha, 415.
Idol in Horeb, 249.
Idumæa, 8.
Indian Ocean, 367.
Inscriptions, 33, 44.
Irby and Mangles, Captains, 129, 142.
Isaac, 55, 56.
Ishmael, 51, 68.
Ishmaelites, 25, 68, 72, 74.
Ishmeelites, 100.
Ismail Pasha, 165.
Ismailia, 288.
Israel, Children of, 98.
Israel, Land of, 55.
Israelites, 22, 40, 41, 42, 46, 55, 93, 94, 115, 116, 118, 320, 360, 364, 365, 396, 404, 405, 424, 434, 511.

Israelites—
Encampment by Red Sea of, 36, 72, 340.
Religion of, 73.
Exodus of, 365.
Passage of Red Sea of, 433, 452, 454, 455, 459, 511.
Italian, 324.

JACOB, 55, 100, 101, 103.
'Jacob's Flight,' 48, 151, 176.
Jebel Atâghtagieh, 415, 416.
Jebel Erótawa, 404, 412, 415, 503, 505.
Jebel Hârûn, 396.
Jebel Hesma, 417.
Jebel Katarina, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 34, 42, 43.
Jebel Magráh, 8, 59.
Jebel Maujar, 475.
Jebel Musa, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 27–37, 42, 43, 77.
Jebel-e'-Nûr, 226, 229, 246, 251, 252, 305, 393, 394, 396, 397, 434, 440, 464, 475, 495, 498, 499, 513, 520.
Jebel Serbal (*see* Serbal).
Jebel Shafeh, 417.
Jebel Shera, 415, 417.
Jebel Suwékhed, 354.
Jebel Tor, 396.
Jeremiah, 363.
Jerome, 77.
Jerusalem, 15.
Jesirat Fir'ôn, 359, 452, 460, 469.
'Jesus the Messiah,' 32, 166.
Jethro, 72, 75, 344.
Cave of, 230.
Jews, 2, 9, 170, 367, 369.
History of the, 53.
Jordan, 3, 67, 77.
Joseph, 52, 54, 68, 93, 100, 101, 103–106, 109–112, 117, 118, 123.
Josephus, 2, 3, 5, 8, 16, 29, 33, 67, 83, 84, 98, 118.
Judges, 69.
Julian, Emperor, 19, 23.
Justin Martyr, 5.
Justinian, Emperor, 29, 30, 31, 32.

KADESH, 9, 51.
Barnea, 519.
Kala'at en Nakhal, 57, 397, 479, 480, 481.
Kay, Mr., 157.
Kebir, Wady el, 62.
Kent, 479, 492.
Keturah, 3, 67, 68.
Khartum, 113, 495.
Railway to, 216.
Khédive, the, 66, 127, 150, 151, 154, 160, 165, 188, 190, 194, 203, 216, 217, 221, 234, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 394, 395, 456, 475, 484, 492, 496, 497, 502, 503–508.
Kilauea, 130.
Korân, the, 305, 401, 473, 486, 505.
Kordofân, 177, 242.

LABORDE, M., 17, 117.
Lahai-roi, 55.
Land of Bondage, 46.
Lapis Pharanites, 7, 18, 44.
Ledja valley, 11, 15.
Lepsius, Prof., 7, 8, 13, 33, 34, 43, 85, 89, 101, 103, 104, 106, 117, 206.
Lesseps, M. de, 177, 195, 196, 199, 201, 242, 285.
Levick, Mr., 292, 301.
Libyan Desert, 162, 177, 188, 194, 205, 242, 508.
Livingstone, Dr., 207, 487, 508.
Loreto, 15.

Lot, 67.
Lucius, 24, 26.
Ludim, 47, 50.
Lysa, 57.

MA'AN, 417, 419.
Macgregor, Mr. J., 176.
Maghara Sho'eib, 72, 341, 343, 344.
Maghara, 7, 44, 359, 451, 460, 462, 485.
Magi, 5.
Mahaserat (Musry), 467.
Malta, 307, 321.
Maltese, 333.
Manetho, 76, 79, 81, 83, 84, 89, 96, 118, 119.
Manethonic lists, 92, 118, 122.
Mangles, Capt., 129.
Mariette Bey, 85–92, 93, 99, 116, 200, 203, 204.
Massowah, 249, 267.
Mauritius, 329.
Mavia, 23, 24, 25, 30.
M.'Killop Pasha, 163, 180, 244, 254, 288, 294, 296, 376, 522.
Mecca, 129.
Mediterranean, 484.
Menes, 84, 85, 90.
Menzaleh, Lake, 94.
Mesopotamia, 48.
Meteorological Observations, 413, 433, 435, 471, 591.
Mezari, 57, 59.
Midian (Mûgna), 3, 67, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 336–342, 359, 371, 441, 492.
  Fort of, 351.
Midianites, 68, 72, 74, 100.
Milan, 135.
Milman, Dean, 52, 53, 424.
Milne, Mr. J., 125, 126, 128, 129, 130–136, 174, 179, 200, 218, 231, 246, 302, 382, 387, 395, 399, 402, 405, 415, 416, 436, 451, 456, 460, 475, 478, 487, 501.
Mining settlements, 42.
Missionaries, 173.
Mitzráim, 38, 39, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 68, 80, 93, 98, 99, 100, 103, 104, 105, 109, 110, 116, 117, 118, 120, 122, 123.
Mitzráim of Scripture, 56, 62, 77.
  Nakhal, 63, 64, 75, 76.
  Yéor of, 65, 66.
Mitzrites, 93, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 104, 105, 108–113, 115, 116, 123, 200, 359, 360, 362, 363, 365, 369, 371, 424.
Moabites, 67, 68.
Mohammed Ali Pasha, 253.
Mohammed Pasha, 287, 290, 294.
Morrieson, Colonel R., 152, 161, 285, 295, 302, 516.
Moses, 2, 3, 10, 11, 21–29, 38, 39, 42, 64, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 93, 101, 112, 115, 118, 344, 359, 363, 364, 381, 416, 486, 502.
Mosque of, 349, 350.
Mountain of Light, 397, 402, 436.
Munzinger Bey, 260, 261, 267.
Murray, Mr. J., 129, 508, 509, 521.

NAIN, 8.
Nakhal Mitzraim, 62, 63, 64, 75, 76.
Nares, Sir G. S., 308.
Negeb, or South Country, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 58, 74, 98.
Nicon, 19, 20, 27.
Nile, 52, 53, 54, 56, 63, 64, 65, 123, 368, 495.
  Boils, 177.
Nilus, 19, 21, 22, 23, 27, 29.
Northcote, Sir S. H., 502, 510.

Northcote, Mr., 513.
Nubar Pasha, 158, 165, 168, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 187, 191, 194, 220, 234, 241, 244, 245, 258, 254, 259, 263, 268, 294, 295, 491, 504, 506, 507, 509.

OBEDIAN, 21, 23, 24, 30.
Onkelos, 115, 116.
Ophir, 72.
Ophthalmia, 198.
Oppenheim, Messrs., & Co., 154, 158, 160, 168, 177, 179, 181, 183.
Ordnance Survey, 34, 37, 38, 43, 309.
  Map, 37.
'Origines Biblicæ,' 6, 46, 52, 67, 78, 93, 104, 115, 180, 366.
Orton, 510.
Owen, Prof., 96, 99, 250, 256, 259, 513, 515.

PAGET, Admiral Lord C., 516, 521.
Palestine, 19, 25, 29, 30, 58.
Palgrave, Mr., 347, 348, 419, 420.
'Palinurus,' H.M.S., 334, 358.
'Pall Mall Gazette,' 518.
Palmer, Prof., 7, 8, 14, 34, 35, 37, 39, 41, 56, 57, 58, 60, 423, 427, 523.
Papyrus of Turin, 85.
Paran, 7, 8, 9, 28, 44, 51.
Paris, 131.
Passports, 154, 155.
Pathrusim, 47, 50.
Paul, St., 4, 5, 15, 22.
  Apostle, the, 67.
Paulus, Dr., of Jena, 52.
Peiran, 8.
Peninsular and Oriental Co., 135, 138, 152, 289, 290, 304, 487, 522.
Pelusium, 96.
Pentateuch, 2, 6, 9, 46, 64, 65, 170, 171.
  Hebrew, 93.
Persia, 23.
Persian Gulf, 368.
Petra, 129, 415, 417.
Peutinger tables, 57.
Pharan, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 23, 27, 28, 30, 32, 368.
  Peninsula of, 38, 42, 44, 75.
Pharaoh, 3, 39, 40, 74, 100, 101, 103, 106, 109, 112, 118, 123, 359, 369, 451, 453, 454, 455, 464, 486.
Pharpar river, 48.
Philistia, 55.
Philistim, 47, 50.
Philistines, 45, 47, 51, 52, 96, 99, 105, 200, 371.
  Land of, 54, 55, 93.
  King of, 55.
Phœnicia, 23.
Pilgrims, 472, 477.
Pi-ha-hiroth, 230, 460, 461, 462, 463, 483.
Pilot, 308, 309.
Pithom, 103.
Plato, 81.
Pliny, 7, 44.
Porter, Dr., 229.
Potiphar, 100.
Potipherah, 103.
Procopius, 28, 29, 30, 31, 101.
Promised Land, 64.
Psammitichus, 79.
Ptolemy, 7, 9, 17, 18, 27.
  Philadelphus, 79, 82.
'Punch,' 513.
Punic, 324.
Pyramids, the, 231.
  Builders of, 95, 96.

QUARANTINE, 149.

RADJLÂ, Harra, 129.
Rahab, 77.
Râhah, Er, 36.
Raitha, 19, 21.
Raithu, 27.
Ramadhan, 308, 309, 331.
Ramsay, Prof., 124.
Ramses, 71.
Ramses II., 88, 89, 90, 103.
Ras Mohammed, 316, 317.
  Cape of, 317, 318.
  El Musry, 460, 461, 463, 465, 466, 468.
Ras en Nagb, 469.
  El Satkh, 471, 472.
  El Gibab, 483.
  Fartak, 334.
Rawlinson, Prof., 96.
Red Sea, 3, 6, 20, 29, 30, 38, 40, 46, 66, 72, 74.
Red (Edom) Sea, 360, 361, 362, 363, 365, 366, 368, 369, 371, 372.
  Coral reefs, 331.
Rechabites, 73, 74.
Rephidim, 404.
Ritter, 31, 120, 121.
Robinson, Dr. E., 34, 107, 464–469, 505.
Rogers, Mr. E. T., 169, 174, 177, 178, 184, 185, 186, 224.
  Consul, 491.
  Miss M. E., 170.
Rohlfs, Dr. Gerhard, 188.
Romans, 7, 24, 25.
Royal Geographical Society, 232, 304, 381, 395, 413, 448, 487.
Rüppell, 13, 16, 34, 330, 505.
Russia, Emperor of, 397.
Russians, 243, 263.
Ryyah Ras, 314.

SAHARA, Desert of, 205, 242.
Said Pasha, 243.
Sais, 81.
Samaritans, 170, 171, 172.
Samson, 55.
San, 94.
Saqqarah, table of, 90.
Sarabit el Khadim, 40.
Saracens, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, 30.
Saxon language, 324.
Schnepp, Dr., 94.
Schweinfurth, Dr., 205, 242.
Sciassar, Captain, 293, 300, 381, 383, 449.
Scriptures, Hebrew, 93, 99, 100, 103.
Scripture History, 54.
Scrope, Mr. Poulett, 130, 131, 309.
Secretaries, 267.
Seils, 59.
Seid Bey, 290.
Semites, 101, 106.
Septuagint Greek version, 49, 50, 115, 117, 369.
Serbal, 8, 10–17, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 42, 43.
Sethi, 89, 90.
Shaumur Um, 9, 16.
Shearwater, H.M.S., 305.
Sheba, 72.
Shechem, 48.
Sheikh Mohammed ibn Iját, 404, 425, 434, 456.
Shellaby, Yakûb esh, 169, 198, 223.
Shepheard's Hotel, 166.
Shepherd Kings, 96, 97, 100, 106, 117, 118, 123.
Sherm el Monjeh, 318, 319.
Shishak, 99.
Shunamite widow, 55.
Shur, 51, 68.
  Wilderness of, 362.
Sidi Ali ibn 'Elem, 401, 413, 424, 500, 502, 520.

'Simla,' the, 135, 138.
Sin, Wilderness of, 41.
Sinai, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9–19, 21, 23, 27, 28, 34, 45, 47, 66, 67, 73, 75, 76, 77, 124, 125, 129, 130, 135, 179, 187, 227, 246, 251, 252.
Sinai, Mount, 382, 392, 394, 396, 400, 401, 402–412, 415, 424, 425, 434, 436, 440, 442, 505, 506, 518, 523, 524.
The pseudo, 312, 394, 401, 512.
'Sinai a Volcano,' 53, 78, 182, 366, 395, 436, 439, 521.
Sinaitic inscriptions, 12, 15, 28–33, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 405, 406, 408, 423, 442, 443, 464, 471, 472, 476, 481, 486, 499, 501, 503, 506.
Sirbonis, Lake, 511.
Slave trade, 162, 505.
Socrates, 23.
Solomon, 38, 80, 99, 360, 363.
Solon, 79, 81.
South Country, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 74.
Stanley, Dean, 229, 366, 380, 382, 386, 424, 495.
Stanton, General, 161, 165, 177, 179, 183, 184, 186, 190, 208, 212, 220, 234, 249, 252, 256, 493, 498, 519, 523.
Steamers, 217, 227, 228, 235, 244, 254.
Stokes, Colonel, Sir J., 252, 521, 522.
Stone, General, 521.
Suakin, 243, 495.
Canal for, 255, 257.
Succoth, 392, 397, 479, 480, 481, 502.
Suez, 285, 286, 290, 487.
Gulf of, 6, 38, 42, 46, 62, 360, 362, 364-366, 369, 370, 485, 490.
Suez—
Post-office of, 223.
Commissioner, 252.
Isthmus of, 45.
Suez Canal, 186, 195, 489.
Bridge over, 429.
Sufsâfeh, Ras, 16, 34, 35, 36, 37, 77.
Sutherland, Duke of, 192.
Sybille, Ras, 314.
Sylvanus, 18.
Syncellus, Georgius, 84.
Syria, 47, 398, 431.
Syrian Desert, 68.

TAKA, 243.
Canal for, 255, 257.
Takhterawân, 237, 258, 486.
Tanis, 94.
Tayyibat Isem, 354.
Teleilât el 'Anab, 58.
Tents, 249.
Thabatha, 19.
Thales, 80.
Theodoret, 25.
Theodulus, 21, 22, 23.
Thurburn, Mr. Hugh, 172, 232.
Tih, Desert of, 7.
Fertilising of, 492.
Tillemont, 18.
'Times, The,' 247, 248, 487, 523.
Timsah, Lake, 288.
Tirân, Island of, 320, 321, 334.
Tod, Rathbone, & Co., 189, 216, 238, 258.
To'ebah, 107–118.
Tor, 18, 21, 27, 28, 312, 313.
Tothmes III., 87.
Traditions, 34, 42, 62, 74, 344, 359, 415, 424, 449, 486, 498.
Do. (Palmer), 62, 74.
Tramways, 243.
Tridacua gigantea, 315.

Turin, 133.
Turkey, 335.
Turquoise mines, 40.

UGÚM, 59.

VALENS, Emperor, 23, 25.
Venice, 135, 136.
Victor, 25.
Volcanoes, 124, 125, 129, 131, 250, 320.
Volney, M., 420, 421, 422.

WADY EL AIN, 58.
Amran, 392, 436, 437, 433, 444.
Arabah, 67, 410, 458, 519.
El 'Arish, 63, 371, 479, 480, 481, 484, 485, 519.
Water parting of, 485.
Wady Berein, 59, 60, 62.
Gaseimeh, 58.
Hanein, 60, 62.
Hawawiet, 482.
Imshash, 472.
Ithem (Etham), 386, 391, 404, 410, 413, 415, 437, 442, 443, 444, 449, 519.
El Kebir, 62.
El Khalil, 58.
Kureis, 477.
Wady Lussán, 57.
Maghárah, 40.
Mahaserat (Musry), 460, 461, 463, 467, 483, 487.
Nasb, 40.
Nethilah, 482.
El Satkh, 464.
Es Seram, 58.
Sigilliyeh, 14.
Washington, Admiral, 305.
West, H.B.M. Consul, 244, 288, 301.
Wetzstein, Prof., 33, 131, 176.
Wilderness of the Exodus, 38.
Wilkinson, Sir G., 96.
Wilton, Mr. E., 7.
Wilson, Major C. W., 14, 176, 523.

YAKUT, 129, 440.
Yam Suf, 38, 46, 66, 361, 362, 363, 364, 371.
Yéor, 63, 65, 66.
Young, Mr., 513.

ZALMUNNA, 68.
Zebah, 68.
Zebir Jebel, 9, 16.
Zeila, 20.
Zelimeh, Abu, 42.
Zoan, 94.

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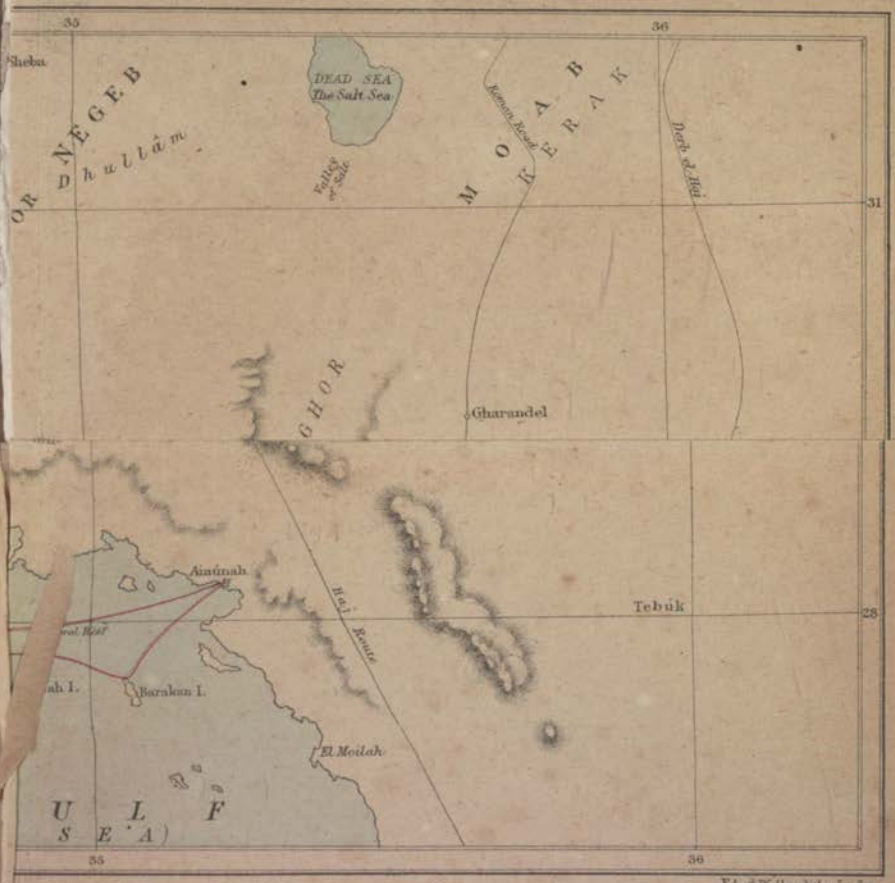

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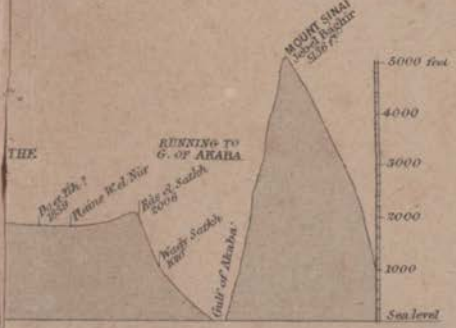

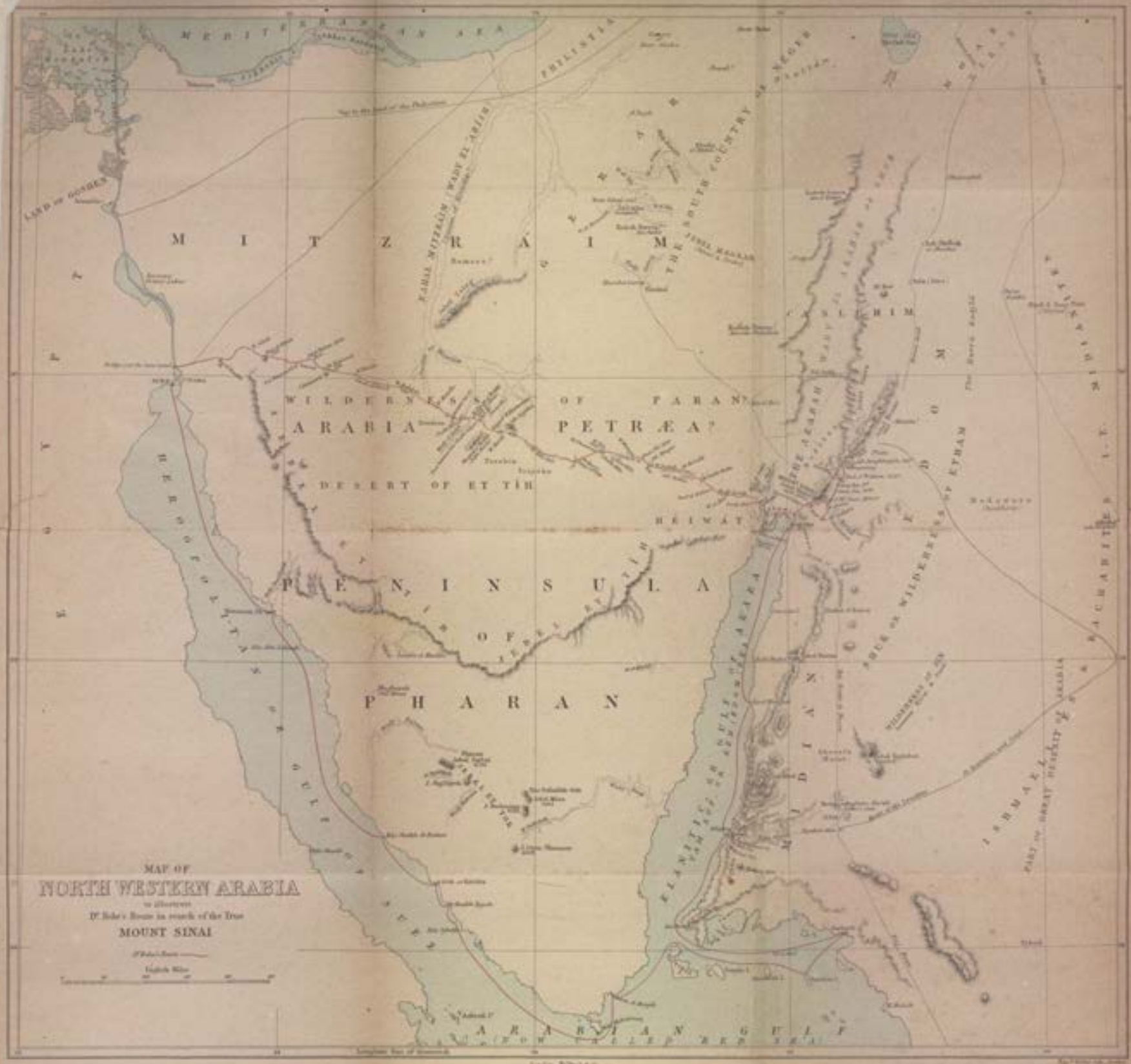
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